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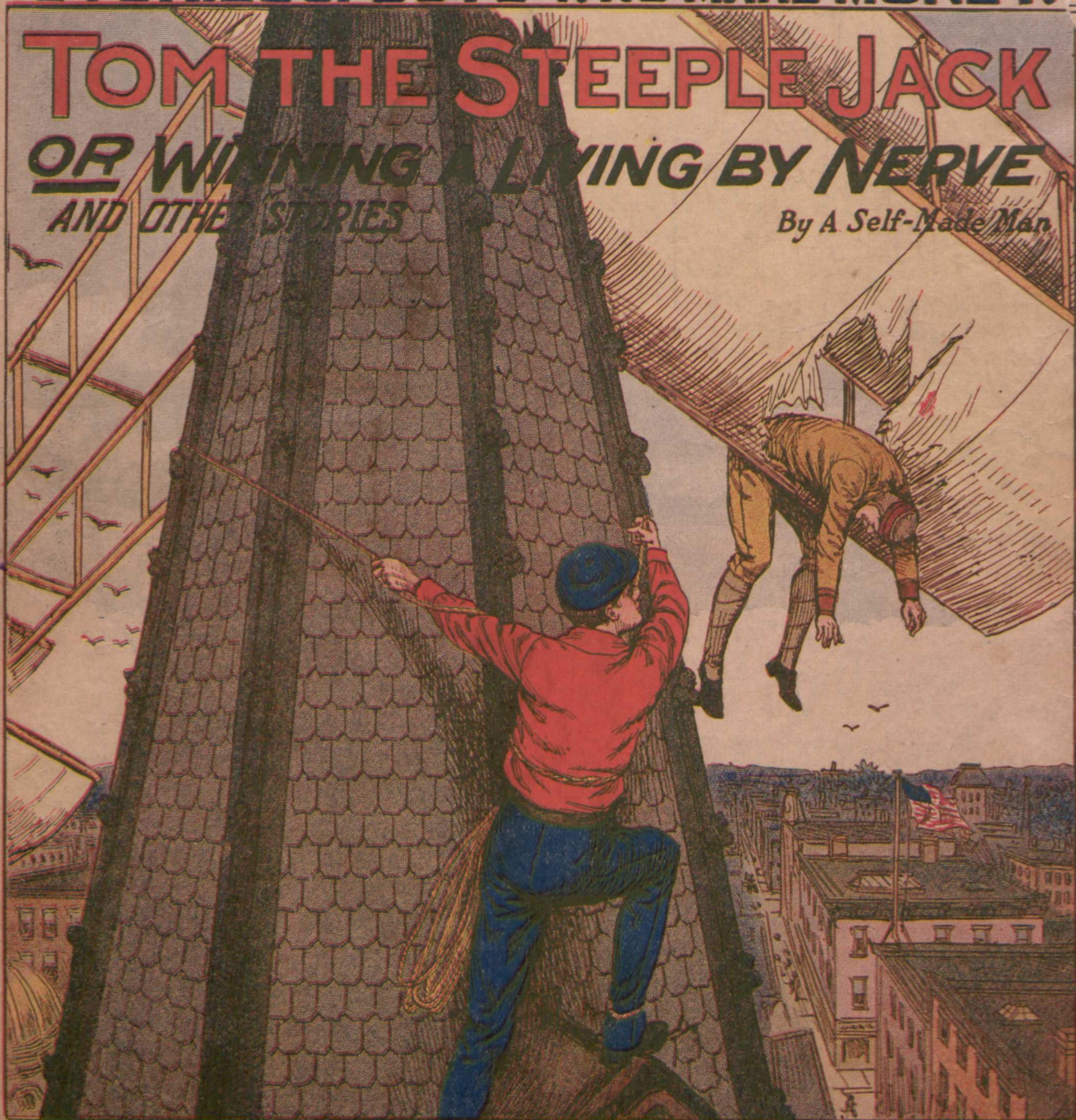
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FORTUNE WEEKLY

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

TOM THE STEEPLE JACK OR WINNING A LIVING BY NERVE AND OTHER STORIES

By A Self-Made Man



Gripping the rope looped around the steeple, Tom dragged himself to the top of the window frame. He was almost near enough to the unconscious aeronaut to seize his down-hanging arms. The broken aeroplane was moving up and down dangerously.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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TOM THE STEEPLE-JACK

—OR—

WINNING A LIVING BY NERVE

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

A TRAGIC INTERVIEW.

"Nellie Dare, you're the prettiest girl in the State of Maine," said Herbert Duncan, a good-looking, sprucely-dressed youth of eighteen, to his fair companion as the two stood in the afternoon sunshine on the top of a long line of beetling cliffs which lined the coast at that point, their base laved by the rippling waters of the broad Atlantic.

"Thank you for the compliment, Mr. Duncan," replied the girl, with a mock courtesy.

"Do you know I think more of you than any other girl in the world?" he added, earnestly, trying to take her hand.

"Dear me, how sudden!" said Miss Dare, drawing back, with a mischievous little laugh. "Are you often taken this way, Mr. Duncan?"

"I wish you wouldn't call me Mr. Duncan," said the boy, evidently annoyed. "Everybody calls me Herbert."

"Do they? Then you must consider me an exception."

"But I don't want you to be an exception. I want you to call me Herbert. I want you to be nice to me and let me take you around like the other fellows take their girls. You know my father is rich, the most important person in the village, and everybody takes his hat off to him. We live in the finest house in the neighborhood, and are looked up to as the real class. My father has just bought a brand new touring car of the best make. I'll be glad to take you out in it. There are lots of places we can go, and I'll give you a swell time. You'll be the envy of all the village girls. I'll bet there isn't one of them but would jump at the chance I am offering you."

"Why don't you give them the chance to jump, then?" laughed the girl.

"Because I've got no use for any of them. You're the only girl that takes my eye. I want your company or none."

"I appreciate the honor you are offering me, but I can't accept your attentions."

"Why not?"

"For several reasons."

"What are the reasons?"

"Well, one is the difference in our social standing."

"Never mind that. It doesn't count with me."

"It counts with me," said the girl, firmly. "I am a working girl, employed in the canning house, while you are a rich man's son. I prefer to associate with those I have been brought up with."

"Maybe you prefer Tom Morris' company to mine?" said Herbert, with a spiteful ring to his voice.

"Candidly I do," replied Nellie Dare, coolly.

"I don't admire your taste," he sneered.

"That's a matter of indifference to me."

"I should think you would be glad to be seen in my company."

"Indeed! Your company doesn't interest me at all. I can manage to exist without it."

"Oh, come now, you don't mean that."

"I do mean it."

Herbert dug one of his heels viciously into the ground and muttered something that was inaudible.

The girl's opposition made him angry.

He was quite infatuated with the lovely Miss Dare, who came of humble parentage and was employed in the fish canning establishment, of which his father was a large stockholder, pasting labels on the tins after they had been soldered up.

She was undeniably a beauty, and even attired in her cheap Sunday gown and hat she cast the swellest young lady of the village in the shade.

As she stood near the young aristocrat, who had encountered her by chance on the cliff road, she looked as blooming as a rose.

There was an unconscious grace in her attitude and movements that almost belied her humble origin.

Her figure was slight, but well rounded, her foot small and neat.

Her eyes were like sapphires, and full of expression.

Her ruby lips were slightly parted, disclosing a glimpse of perfect pearly teeth imbedded in pink.

Herbert Duncan was willing to swear that a daintier creature did not exist, and he chafed under the independent way she treated him.

He was not a bad looking fellow, and yet there was something about his countenance that was not attractive.

In some respects he was a spoiled boy, and his social position made him supercilious toward his equals, and overbearing toward those he regarded as his inferiors.

As a result he made himself unpopular, and was cordially disliked by the majority of the village boys.

"Considering who I am, I don't think you are treating me fair, Miss Dare," he continued after a pause.

"Don't you? I'm sorry," she replied.

Nevertheless, she didn't look a bit sorry.

Rather she seemed to be amused at her companion's show of annoyance.

She knew she held the whip hand over him, and, woman-like, she revelled in her advantage.

"Don't you think a person in my station of life is worth a dozen common fisher boys?"

"That depends on who the fisher boys are."

"I refer particularly to Tom Morris."

A flash shot suddenly from the girl's eyes that should have warned Herbert he was treading on delicate ground.

He was not in a humor to heed the warning if he had noticed it.

"Who is the fellow, anyway? What does he amount to? I am surprised that a girl as pretty as you would have anything to do with him," he continued. "His father, I've heard, was a low-bred ruffian, while his mother——"

"Stop!" flashed the girl, in a tone of blended scorn and indignation. "How dare you talk that way, and you call yourself a young gentleman!"

"Oh, I have touched you at last," he replied with a sneering chuckle. "Perhaps you would like to defend him?"

"Tom Morris doesn't need a defender. He can take care of himself, which is more than you are capable of doing if you got into trouble. It wouldn't be well for you to tell him what you just said to me."

"Is that so? Do you think I'm afraid to do it?"

"I wouldn't advise you to, that's all."

"I don't wish to have anything to do with the fellow. My mother has told me never to associate with common people."

"Don't worry, Mr. Duncan, Tom Morris has no wish to associate with you."

"Did he say that?" cried Herbert, angrily.

"I am saying it," she replied.

"He'd better not make any cracks like that around here if he knows when he's well off. I don't propose to be insulted by a common chap like him."

"What would you do?" she said, tantalizingly.

"No matter what I'd do. I'd get square with him somehow."

"I thought you didn't want anything to do with him?"

"I don't, but I'm not going to let him shoot off his mouth at me. I don't understand what you see about him. He'll never amount to anything. He's only had a village school education, and mighty lucky he's been to get that. He has to go out fishing to make a living for himself and his mother, and how do they live? Do they ever have anything decent to eat? I doubt it. He'll always be a common fisherman as long as he lives. He isn't cut out for anything else."

"And what do you expect to be when you're a man?"

"I shall be a lawyer like my father, and a politician. I shall be a man of importance like he is. I'll run the village, and the canning establishment, and ride around in my car like a gentleman," said Herbert, swelling out his chest.

The girl uttered a silvery laugh.

"That's a long time ahead, and lots of things may happen to alter your program," she said. "You are still only a school-boy."

"Excuse me, I'm a student. I am studying now under a private tutor from Bowdoin College," said Herbert, in a consequential tone.

"That's the same as being at school, isn't it?"

"No. The tutor lives at my home and gives me instructions there."

"You are taught, and have to do your lessons. What's the difference?"

"Oh, there's a lot of difference. It's more select, you know."

"Why didn't you continue at the Ridgeway Academy, which you attended for a year or so?"

"My father believed I would do better under a tutor who would give me all his attention. I expect to go to Bowdoin in the fall."

The girl laughed again.

"The Ridgeway Academy prepares boys for college. I heard that your father was advised to have you taught privately because you couldn't keep up with the class you were in."

"Who told you that?"

"Never mind. It was reported around that you were a dunce and never would get into college unless some special effort was taken to brighten you up."

"That's a lie!" cried Herbert, losing his temper altogether.

"Thank you, Mr. Duncan. I think it's time we parted after that," said Nellie Dare, moving away.

Herbert sprang forward and seized her by the wrist.

"Tell me the name of the person who slandered me that way."

"Release my arm at once! How dare you touch me so roughly?" cried the girl, spiritedly.

"I'll let you go when you tell me," glared the young aristocrat.

"I'll tell you nothing. Let go my wrist."

"Was it Tom Morris?" hissed Herbert.

"You are hurting me, you coward!"

"I insist on knowing."

The girl, in her efforts to get away from young Duncan, had moved nearer the edge of the cliff.

Neither noticed at the moment how close they were to the brink, but the girl was dangerously so.

"I care nothing for your insistence, or you, either. I wouldn't tell you if my life depended on it, so there!"

"You spiteful little cat!" snarled Herbert. "I'll have you discharged from the cannery. Go! I've got no further use for you!"

He gave the girl a rough shove and turned away.

She staggered to the very edge of the cliff and trod upon an overlapping patch of earth which hung a hundred feet above the jagged rocks and swirling water below.

She uttered a scream on realizing her peril, which caused the boy to turn back and look at her.

He saw her swaying on the brink where he had pushed her in his anger.

Realizing her danger, he turned white with fear, but had not the courage to spring forward and catch her, though it is doubtful if he could have covered the distance in the brief space of time that intervened before the patch of earth gave way under her weight, and she disappeared, with another terrified scream, over the edge of the cliff.

CHAPTER II.

THE FEAT OF HIS LIFE.

Midway between the village of Bayport, where Herbert Duncan lived on the hill in a handsome house and Nellie Dare lived in a humble cottage near the shore, and the spot where the foregoing interview between the pair took place was a break in the iron-bound stretch of cliffs.

It constituted a small cove where a rusty black fishing boat, of no great size, lay at anchor under the lee of a spur of rock which concealed its presence from seaward view.

With the exception of a narrow patch of hard white beach inside the cove, which widened to fifty feet at low tide, the secluded spot presented a wild and rocky appearance.

From the beach a rugged path wound its sinuous way up the rocks to a broad, flat shelf forty feet or more above the high tide mark.

A ledge of rock jutted out from the cliff and formed a kind of rude parapet on the outer edge of the shelf.

Behind this natural battlement stood a small, weather-scarred cottage which backed up against the face of the cliff.

The upper part of this dwelling, the red saline dusted roof and a foot of wall, could be seen from the sea.

That is, in clear weather, and particularly when the sunshine glistened upon the salty particles.

In dull, threatening weather the cottage could hardly be made out, and when a fog was drifting against the cliffs, not at all.

On the day our story opens the sunshine was sleeping on the red roof and on the patch of shelf in front.

It hung over the little piece of arable ground on the right, where vegetables flourished during the greater part of the year.

It found entrance through the open doorway and the two small windows that faced to the west.

And it brought out into relief a woman of perhaps forty who sat in a rocking-chair with a book in her hands.

An old-fashioned kitchen dresser, of a type long since discarded, stood in one corner.

On this was displayed rows of cheap crockery and glassware.

A small deal table, half a dozen chairs, a stove, hooks from which depended pots and pans, and several shelves crowded with a miscellaneous assortment of articles, practically completed the furnishing of the living-room.

A door on the left, and another on the right, led into two small bedrooms.

That comprised the interior of the cottage.

Outside the door a dip net stood against the wall on one side, and a grapnel hung by a peg on the other.

On the smooth face of the shelf was stretched a cast net. A good looking, stalwart boy was mending the rents here and there in the delicate tracery of cross lines.

This was Tom Morris, the fisher lad referred to by Herbert Duncan, and the woman inside the cottage was his mother.

As the boy worked he hummed the words of an old song, the refrain of which ran:

"In the sea there are many strange fish—some are large and others are small—some are caught with a hook, and some with a net, and others won't be caught at all."

He kept time with his needle, while his face beamed with good nature.

"There, I guess that's the last one," he said, in a tone of satisfaction as he gave the net a shake and looked it over with his sharp eyes.

"I hope it is," said a boy's voice close by, "for the afternoon is half gone almost, and you promised to go over to the Mouse Trap when the tide was half ebb."

"Hello, Bob, is that you?" said Tom, looking up and seeing his particular friend, Bob Jones, who lived in the village. "I forgot all about our arrangement, but I guess the tide is right for us to venture."

"Sure it is. I've been watching it for the last hour. When I saw it start to go out I came over to meet you. I thought you didn't work on Sunday?"

"I don't, as a rule, but as I've got to go out in the morning, and when I laid the net out to dry I found a dozen breaks in it, I had to turn to and patch them up."

"Oh, well, if you don't do anything worse than that on Sunday I guess you'll be able to squeeze through the golden gates when you die," grinned Bob.

"I'm willing to take my chance on it. Mother and I have got to live, and as things haven't been prosperous of late, I can't afford to miss the run of mackerel that's reported off shore. No one can tell how long they'll hang around these waters, and when they start further north a fellow has got to follow them or go without."

"Well, let's make a start. It isn't often a fellow can get in and out of the Mouse Trap without getting his feet wet, and I've got my Sunday rig on."

"I'll gamble I can get out of it any time."

"I wouldn't bet you can't, but I don't know anybody else who can. You're a wonder at climbing. I don't see how you do it sometimes with all your nerve. Joe Lawless saw one of your feats, and ever since he's called you the Human Fly. He said you were wasting your time going out fishing—that you could make a raft of money by hiring yourself to a circus."

"I've heard that circus life isn't what it's cracked up to be."

"I don't know. Circus people travel these days in Pullman cars and live on the fat of the land."

"That's all right, but a chap has to be something more than a mere climber to qualify with a show. I've read that the performers have to start in when they are quite young to limber up and learn the tricks of the business. Every winter they have to think up and practice some new stunt for the coming season, as the public these days want novelty. The people go to the circus every year when it comes around, and they don't want to see the same thing twice."

By that time the boys had reached the beach below, from which spot Tom led the way over the rocks to the long line of beach outside at the foot of the cliffs, now partly uncovered by the receding tide.

It was an ideal early summer afternoon.

The gulls circled in and out as though at play.

The sea which so often thundered upon the path the boys were following was now in a most submissive state.

It ebbed and flowed on the beach without a sound, retiring further and further out as time passed.

The Mouse Trap, the spot the boys were bound for, was a treacherous indentation in the cliffs half a mile east of the cottage.

It was circular in shape and almost wholly shut in at the bottom.

A narrow opening five feet high, though not that high above the line of the outer beach, afforded entrance.

At half ebb it was quite clear of water, and through the hole one had a view of an entrancing little swimming pool inside, surrounded by a wide beach.

Both beach and pool were much below high-water mark, as was also the entire entrance.

Inside, the cliff walls rose up a hundred feet or more, and for thirty feet they looked as smooth as a marble floor, affording not the slightest foothold for a climber.

Above that point an expert climber would find lots of rough knobs of rock and jagged crevices to support his way almost to the top.

The highest point he could go was to a shelf within twenty feet of the top of the cliff.

There the adventurous one would find himself stuck, and unless a rope was lowered to him from above, he could not complete the ascent.

For one to be caught by the incoming tide in the hole in the wall was regarded as certain death.

Once the tide got the bulge on the person within, the en-

trance closed so rapidly that the bewildered prisoner found escape impossible.

Hence it had been dubbed the Mouse Trap.

It was such a lovely swimming pool that the village boys frequently went there during the summer in spite of the risk they knew they ran; but they took good care to time their coming, and always left one of their number seated at the entrance to watch the tide.

The moment it began filling up the depression in the line of the beach outside, the watcher gave warning, and a quick scramble ensued among the swimmers, who usually dressed themselves outside.

Tom Morris had visited the place time and again.

He had been there a score of times alone, and had the run of the tide down as fine as any one could get it.

He was by nature a daring and expert climber.

Almost from the first time he cast his eyes upon the ledge eighty feet above, where a lone stunted pine tree grew out from a fissure, his ambition was to reach it by climbing from the Mouse Trap.

He tried it from every point, but failed to ascend higher than a yard.

Even that was a feat that no other boy, try as he would, could accomplish.

The preceding spring something happened to open up a few fissures in the first stretch of the wall.

One day Tom detected the change, kicked off his shoes, and tried it again.

He found it a tough proposition, but he reached the point where the rest looked easy.

Then he discovered that the tide was catching him, and that if he continued to the shelf he would have to roost there for six or seven hours.

He made a spring into the pool and escaped with a good wetting, being barely able to swim out through the fast closing entrance.

Having blazed the way, he was resolved to try again at a better time.

The necessity of following his fishing business, however, prevented him, and he had not made the ledge up to the time he and Bob went there that Sunday.

When the boys reached the Mouse Trap the tide was well out.

Some time would elapse before it flowed again.

Bob's object in visiting the place was to hunt for shells and a certain kind of pebbles that the tide carried into the pool.

While Bob was looking for what he wanted, Tom was gazing up at the ledge and the tree.

"I told you I could escape from the Mouse Trap at any time," he said.

"I know you did, but I don't see how. It is considered an impossibility," answered Bob.

"Bet you a quarter I can prove it."

"I'll take you. When are you going to make good?"

"Now."

"Do you mean that?" said Bob, with sudden interest.

"Watch me," said Tom, kicking off his shoes.

Tom certainly did look like a human fly as he slowly made his way up the first stretch of thirty feet, the ascent of which appeared to be an impossible feat.

"Gee! You're a corker," called out Bob, admiringly.

"Nothing like knowing how to do it," Tom shouted back, as he stopped to rest.

"You'd make a fine steeple-jack," returned Bob.

The rest of the way to the ledge proved comparatively easy to Tom, though that doesn't mean it would have been easy to an ordinary climber.

Tom possessed not only the nerve, but also the knack, for doing such stunts.

He soon reached the ledge and perched himself on it.

"I've won the bet," he called down.

Bob admitted that, but he could not help wondering if his friend would find the return trip as easy.

Tom could look out at sea from that point, for the Mouse Trap was enclosed only half way up.

He presently became aware that there were two or more persons on the top of the cliff right over him, for he heard their voices.

One was clearly a girl's voice.

He looked up, but it was impossible to see any one or anything that was not right on the edge.

He stood up, seized the tree, and tested it.

Finding it firm, he leaned out and looked again.

He did not dream that Nellie Dare, the girl of his heart,

and Herbert Duncan, a boy he intensely disliked, were up there, engaged in a wordy combat.

It was at that moment Herbert gave the girl the push that sent her right on the brink.

Her shrill scream startled Tom, and he was still more startled when he saw the flutter of a dress on the edge of the cliff.

Before he could think twice the ground gave way under the girl and she pitched downward.

Tom saw her coming right at him.

He might have dodged and let the girl crash against the tree and roll off to certain death.

Indeed, it seemed foolhardy of him to try to catch her, since the contact was likely to sweep him from the ledge, too.

Yet, without knowing it was the fair Nellie, he wound one arm about the tree and threw up the other to catch her.

She struck the tree and Tom's arm at the same time.

The tree bent, like a reed in a gale, carrying the boy down on the edge of the ledge.

But he hung on for dear life, and between the stout tree and his grip the girl was saved.

CHAPTER III.

NELLIE GOES HOME WITH HER RESCUER.

The girl lay as quiet as any inanimate object, for she had fainted.

Tom carefully extricated himself from the bent tree and rolled her down on the ledge.

Then he raised her in his arms and—recognized her.

"Nellie—Nellie Dare!" he gasped, fairly staggered by the revelation. "Good heavens, how came she to venture so near the edge of the cliff? Whoever she was with should have held her back. My gracious, what an escape she has had! If I hadn't been up here to catch her, or this tree was not here, she would have been killed, even if she had struck the pool below at the deepest point. That would have broken my heart, for there isn't another girl like Nellie in the world."

He held her head upon his knee and rubbed her forehead and hands in an effort to revive her.

Bob, down below, had heard the girl's scream and seen her form falling from the top of the cliff.

Believing she would miss the ledge where Tom stood, or if she hit it would bound off and drop where he stood, he made a dash for the entrance hole in a panic.

He got through, but heard no splashing thud of a body hitting the surface of the pool.

Then he guessed she had hit the ledge square and stayed there, so he ventured back.

Looking up, he saw Tom holding a figure in his arms.

He shouted, but Tom paid no attention to him.

"I wonder if she is dead or only badly hurt?" he asked himself. "Even that short fall was enough to half kill any one."

He waited for some word from his friend.

In a few minutes Tom shouted to him to run back to the cottage, get a long rope, make his way to the top of the cliffs by the route near the cove and come to the place above where Tom stood.

Bob understood and hurried off to carry out Tom's orders.

Tom wondered he had heard nothing from Nellie's companion above.

He did not know, of course, that this person was Herbert Duncan, that he was responsible for the girl's fall, and that the moment she disappeared over the edge he had taken to his heels in terrified flight.

Fifteen anxious minutes elapsed, then Nellie uttered a sigh and opened her eyes and gazed up into Tom Morris' face.

"Oh, Tom!" she said. "Where am I? What has happened to me?"

"Are you much hurt, Nellie?" he asked, eagerly.

"Much hurt! What do you mean? Oh!"

A little scream escaped her lips as memory reasserted itself.

"Save me, Tom, save me!" he cried, seizing his arms convulsively.

"You're safe, dear," he said. "Don't tremble so. You are in no danger."

It was some moments before her hysterical fit passed.

"Oh, Tom, I fell off the cliff. How was I saved?"

"You only fell twenty feet to this ledge, where I happened to be standing and I caught you, with the help of that tree."

"You have saved my life."

"I guess there's no doubt of that."

"Oh, Tom, how good of you. I shall love you forever, you dear boy."

She threw her arms around his neck, pulled his head down and kissed him.

It was the first time their lips had ever met, and the sensation thrilled Tom.

He explained how he had managed by good luck to save her, and she trembled as she looked down on the pool, eighty feet below.

"How came you to be up here, Tom?" she asked, wonderingly. "How did you get here? Not from the top, for you have no rope hanging down. How could you ever have climbed up, and why did you do it?"

Tom explained, and then asked her who had been with her on the cliff.

"Herbert Duncan. I met him along the cliff road, and he forced his company on me. We walked out on the cliff, and his talk was perfectly ridiculous. We got into a spat at last, and he got mad and pushed me to the edge of the cliff, where I lost my balance and fell."

"He pushed you?" cried Tom. "He dared do such a thing! Wait till I meet him, that's all. I'll give him such a licking that he won't get over it for a month."

"No, no, you mustn't. You'd get into trouble, and maybe be arrested and put in jail. You know his father is rich and runs the village."

"Suppose he is rich, is that any reason why his son shall be allowed to escape the consequences of his cowardly act? If I hadn't been up here at the right moment to save you, where would you be now? Dead in the pool below, and Herbert Duncan would have been your murderer, whether he meant to harm you or not. It makes my blood boil to think how near that fellow brought you to your death."

"I shall never notice him again—never!" said Nellie, decidedly.

"I shouldn't think you would. But he ought to be shown up."

"It would do no good to spread the story of his conduct to me. He would deny it, and his father would back him up. As I am only a working girl, people would doubt my statement. They always side with the most important party."

Tom knew that Herbert's father practically ran the village and the fish cannery.

All the fishermen took their catches to that establishment, selling their loads wholesale for cash at the market price dictated by the superintendent, which, however, was a fair one, though often a little lower than they could get at neighboring ports, but not enough to make it an object for the fishermen to take their cargoes to those places unless their cruise took them near them.

The Shoals off Bayport was one of the best fishing grounds for miles up and down the coast, so the Bayport Cannery got all the fish it wanted.

Tom only occasionally dealt with the canning house, for his boat being a small one, his catch was limited at the best, so he peddled his fish around the village at the retail price, and supplied the summer hotel and cottages during the season.

In this way he did very well as a rule.

He turned the money over to his mother, who saved the surplus, keeping her hoard in an earthen crock under the floor of the bedroom in spite of her son's remonstrance, for he told her it wasn't safe, and tried to get her to deposit it in the village bank.

Mrs. Morris had no confidence in banks.

Her husband had lost all his savings in the original village bank when it failed, owing to the fact that the cashier proved a defaulter, looting it of every cent in cash and securities he could get his hands on, and skipping out to parts unknown.

Of course, the other depositors lost, too, and a quarter of them were fishermen; but that did not prevent the same persons going into the new bank when it was started by Jerome Duncan, Herbert's father, and other well-to-do villagers.

The new Bayport Bank appeared to flourish, and as it paid two per cent. interest on monthly balances, everybody who had surplus funds patronized it.

Tom's mother was about the only exception.

She owned the cottage, though not the ground, and lived ground rent free, for the owner of the land which embraced that part of the cliffs never thought of charging her for the use of the cove, which he couldn't utilize himself.

As Tom had to agree with Nellie's presentation of the case, he said no more about proceeding against Herbert Duncan.

The girl asked him how they were going to escape from their ticklish situation.

"Don't worry. Bob Jones will be here presently with a rope, which he will let down and haul you up to the top of the cliff," said Tom.

"And you, too," she said.

"Yes, with your help. Both of you together ought to be able to anchor the other end of the rope while I climb up."

In a few minutes Bob's head appeared over the edge of the cliff.

He was lying down with the rope in his hands.

"Hello, below there!" he called out.

"Let down the rope, Bob," replied Tom.

"Shall I make a slip noose?" Bob asked.

"No. I'll do it. When I give the signal, haul away. Nellie doesn't weigh much over a hundred pounds, so you ought to be able to pull her up."

"I guess I can manage it, though one hundred pounds is some haul for me."

"Is there any way of you bracing yourself firmly up there?"

"Yes, there's a large stone two yards back."

"Do you think you can hold my weight while I climb up by tying the end of the rope around you and anchoring your feet against the stone?"

"I guess so."

"All right. How much slack can you let out and reach the stone?"

"Quite a bit."

"Give me two yards. I'll tie this end securely around Nellie, then I'll climb up and we'll have her up in a jiffy."

Tom's directions were followed out, and in a few minutes both he and Nellie stood in safety on top of the cliff.

"I'm afraid I won't get over the fright I got for a month," said the girl.

"I wouldn't wonder if you didn't," said Tom. "When you went over you thought your last hour had come, I'll bet."

"I was too terrified to think of anything," shuddered Nellie.

Tom told Bob he was curious to learn how Miss Dare came to get her tumble, and Tom gave him the full particulars as he got them from the girl.

"Herbert Duncan actually pushed you off?" said Bob, much astonished.

"He pushed me, but I don't believe he intended to throw me over," said Nellie. "He was very angry at the time, and I guess he did not realize how close to the edge of the cliff we were standing."

"I don't see how he could help knowing it," said Bob. "You ought to call on his father and tell him. You had an awful narrow escape."

Tom coiled up the rope and they walked over to the Cliff road, which ran into the village.

When they came to the path that led over to the cove, Tom persuaded Nellie to call on his mother.

Bob didn't go, but continued on home.

Mrs. Morris, who was a plain-looking woman of the lower strata of society, gave Nellie a warm welcome.

She liked the girl, and she knew that her son was attached to her.

She was horrified when she heard Nellie's story, backed up by Tom's, and declared, in no uncertain way, that Herbert Duncan's conduct had been outrageous.

It seems to be in the nature of poor people to entertain an antipathy against their well-to-do neighbors.

Mrs. Morris felt that way toward the better grade of village residents.

Of course, such a sentiment wasn't charitable, but her whole life had been one of work, with little play in it, and she resented the luck that came to others.

It made her angry to think that a rich man's son should put Nellie Dare in peril of her life through his temper.

In her opinion rich people looked down with contempt on the poor, and thought they could walk over them with impunity.

She told Nellie as much, and declared if she was her mother she'd put on her hat, go straight to the Duncan residence and tell the autocrat what she thought of his son.

"I doubt if that would do you any good, mother. Herbert would swear that the affair was an accident, and his father would consider the case closed after reading him a lecture," said Tom.

Nellie was induced to stay to tea, and while Mrs. Morris was preparing it, she and Tom walked outside and seated themselves on an inverted skiff covered with a piece of sail-cloth.

After the meal, which was finished in the glow of the sunset, Tom and the girl started for the village.

It was dark when they reached the Dare home, and Nellie's parents were wondering what was keeping her away so long.

They welcomed Tom, for he was well liked by them, and

were pleased to hear that their daughter had visited his home and taken tea.

They were humble people themselves, Mr. Dare being a carpenter, and they looked on Tom Morris and his mother as their social equals.

It is true that the more successful fishermen and their families regarded themselves as a peg or two above the Morrises.

The Dares, however, were not proud, though they lived in a nice little cottage and enjoyed many small luxuries.

They did not look down on their less fortunate neighbors, neither did they envy the well-to-do residents of the village who had no use for them.

They were contented with their lot and, as a consequence, happy.

CHAPTER IV.

A FINE CATCH.

It was just dawn next morning when Tom Morris tumbled out of bed.

He wanted to get away early on his fishing trip.

He hoped to reach the Shoals ahead of the fishing fleet from the village, but it was a question if he could.

The fishermen never let the grass grow under their feet when the mackerel were in the neighborhood, and their boats were larger and faster than his, being equipped with a bigger spread of sail.

Still, the Nellie Dare, as Tom had rechristened the old Sea-bird, could sail faster than any craft of her size in that vicinity, old and rusty as she looked.

Early as it was, his mother was up getting breakfast, for she realized the importance of the maxim "the early bird catches the worm."

Not but there were mackerel enough in those seas to load the fleet many times over, but the thing was to catch them.

They ran in huge shoals as thick as blackberries on a bush, but they had an exasperating way of vanishing of a sudden, without warning, just as the fishermen got down to business.

At one moment you might be hauling them in as fast as you could hook them, and then, without any seeming cause, they were gone, like a flash of lightning, and in what direction was a puzzle.

There was no use waiting for them to come back to that particular spot, and the experienced fishermen never did so.

They pulled in their lines and nets at once, and sailed in various directions trying to locate the shoal again.

The boat that was lucky enough to succeed was soon surrounded by the others, as fast as they could come up, and fishing began again.

A dull and even rainy morning was favorably regarded by the fishermen, for luck usually attended them on such an occasion.

On this Monday morning the weather promised to be fine, and the fishing community deemed it wise to get to the Shoals by sunrise.

Tom knew that, so he expected to have plenty of company as soon as he got under way.

The window of his room looked seaward, but on account of the parapet of rock he couldn't see the ocean.

He could see the sky, however, and before he put on his clothes he took a look at it.

He saw something besides the sky and the rocks on this occasion.

He saw a man in a cap and peajacket seated on the parapet looking up and down the shore, and off over the water, through a spyglass.

He was partly concealed by a big rock, but Tom saw him just the same.

"What brings that man here, and what is he up to?" thought the boy, watching the chap curiously. "What is he looking for? He is evidently a sailor, or maybe a petty officer of some vessel. It isn't often we have men visitors, and I don't remember any one who ever came here before with a spyglass."

Tom determined to interview him, and hurried into his clothes.

When he got out on the shelf the man was gone.

At least, he wasn't in sight.

Tom looked up and down and on every side, but failed to find trace of him.

"I'd give something to know what he was interested in at this early hour, before the sun is up," thought the boy.

He had no time to figure on the matter, for just then his mother called him to breakfast, and he went in.

He told her about the man with the spyglass, describing his appearance.

"A man like him called here last evening soon after you

were away with Nellie Dare. It was just growing dark. I noticed the end of a spyglass peeping out of one of his sleeves," said his mother.

"What did he want?"

"He asked me who lived here. I told him I did with my son. He asked where my husband was, and I told him he had been dead these three years. Then he wanted to know what you did for a living, and I told him you went fishing in the sea-son."

"He was mighty curious."

"That's what I told him. He explained that he was looking for a family named Brown that he had heard lived along the shore. He had news for them. Then he asked me if I had noticed lights along the cliff, or on the beach at low tide, lately, but I said I hadn't. He gave me a very hard look, apologized for disturbing me, and went away."

"Hum! Very singular, mother. If that was the man I saw perched on the parapet, he was looking for something besides a family named Brown."

"Maybe he was looking for the lights."

"I saw three lights against the face of the cliff between here and the village a week ago," said Tom.

"You did not mention the matter to me," said his mother. "What time of the night did you see them?"

"About midnight. I had just got home from the village. That was the night I took Nellie to the dance. It was dark and cloudy, but lights could be plainly seen at a distance. I wondered why the lights were in such a place, and watched them for ten or fifteen minutes, when they disappeared. One was a red light and hung above the other two, which were white. They looked like a kind of signal, but the idea of any one signaling at that hour, at such a spot, looked ridiculous to me. They did not appear again as far as I know, so I turned in, for I was tired."

By that time Tom had finished his breakfast, and as he had no time to spare, he picked up his net, which was tied in a bundle, grabbed the package of lunch his mother had prepared for him, and was off.

He ran down the path to his boat, and was hoisting the sail when the man with the spyglass rose up from the rocks and approached him.

"Good-morning, young man?" he said, in a hoarse tone. "You're going out early."

"I am," replied Tom, shortly, starting to hoist the jib.

"Going fishing?"

"Yes."

"After what?"

"Mackerel."

"And I dare say you are bound for the Shoals?"

"That's a good guess."

"Do you mind taking a passenger?"

"Don't want one."

"I'm interested in seeing how mackerel are caught."

"Try one of the big boats, then. There is no room in mine. I need all the space for the fish I expect to catch."

"Then there's no chance of my going with you?" said the man, looking disappointed.

"None at all. Sorry I can't oblige you, but it wouldn't pay me," said Tom, releasing the boat from her mooring rope and, as the wind caught the sails, heading her out through the short, open passage.

Then he laid her course for the Shoals.

The Shoals in question lay about three miles off the coast.

It was known to be a favorite feeding ground for mackerel when the fish got that far north.

By the time they reached the Shoals they were well grown and in good condition, and a tempting prize for the fishermen.

The Shoals was a dangerous stretch of navigation.

Steamers and large sailing vessels could not cross it without running aground in a score of places even at high tide.

At low tide crossing it was out of the question at all, except for craft that drew little water and followed the sinuous channels between the hidden rocks and sandbars.

The fishing fleet could thread its way all through it, as the skippers knew the place like a book; but when loaded down the vessels had to use caution.

Numerous buoys dotted the Shoals, indicating the worst spots, and in addition there were two bell buoys—one to the northeast and one to the southwest.

In the midst of the Shoals was a low, barren island which would have served admirably as a site for a much-needed lighthouse but for the shifting nature of the sand, of which it was wholly composed.

Engineers sent to inspect it found on investigation that no

foundation for a lighthouse would hold, so the project had to be given up.

The island was surrounded by sandbars and sharp rocks, and could only be approached by small sailboats when the tide served.

No one but fishermen ever went ashore on the island, and they but seldom, for there was nothing to be seen but sand and scrub bushes.

Coming out of Bayport harbor Tom saw the fishing fleet in straggling order.

It was a race between the Nellie Dare and the fleet as to which reached the fishing grounds first.

Tom had a mile the advantage of his larger rivals, for the Shoals lay to the east of the little cove.

The men aboard the foremost of the fleet, a fast sailer, saw Tom's boat, and recognized it, but it meant nothing to them whether the boy beat them or not.

He was looked upon as a small freelance whose presence or absence cut no ice.

The wind was rather light, but Tom made good time.

Inside of fifteen minutes he saw he would easily make the fishing ground first and get down to work before the other boats came up.

Half an hour later he was anchored in one of the channels, as close to the island as he cared to venture.

He got out a line or two first to see how the fish were biting.

They fairly jumped at the bait.

That satisfied him they were all around him.

Then he put out his net, anchoring it in a semi-circle.

After that he dropped in his lines and hauled in the fish as quick as he could handle them.

By that time the fleet was half a mile from the Shoals, coming on slowly, for the wind was dropping fast.

Ten minutes later a dead calm prevailed.

"I'll bet those chaps are doing some tall swearing," chuckled Tom. "Each of them will have to get out their boat and tow the sloop into position here. That will take time and a lot of hard work."

This program was put into execution without loss of time, for the skippers of the different boats could see Tom through their glasses hauling fish in like mad, and they knew a feast awaited them.

Tom had several tubs aboard, and he filled them one after the other.

These he tied forward on the half deck; after that he dropped the fish into the oblong well amidships, where they accumulated fast.

The fleet was now taking up positions on the ground.

The sun had been up for some time, and the calm sea sparkled under its rays.

The fishermen were getting out their nets in anticipation of a goodly haul.

Then it was that the mackerel ceased biting at Tom's bait.

One after the other he hauled in his lines with never a fish wiggling on the hook.

Tom knew what that meant—the shoal had taken alarm and gone off somewhere else.

They left no trail, but even if they had the calm prevented Tom or the other fishermen following them.

Those aboard the fleet were wild with disappointment.

They were practically marooned on the Shoal.

Tom was not worrying, for he already had two-thirds of a load, with the net yet to be examined.

From the way the cork floaters dipped he judged that it was full.

He had plenty of time to haul it in, which was done by gathering the ends together first, then pulling a line which closed in the bottom.

The top was gathered the same way, then attaching his tackle, he began turning the little winch, which worked on a combination cog principle, enabling one person to lift a considerable weight.

Of course, the more cogs the easier the work, but each additional cog made the job proportionately slower.

Given cogs enough, Tom could have lifted a ton, if his apparatus would have stood the strain.

In the present case Tom probably raised 600 or 700 pounds of fish.

The little boat heeled over under the strain, but the boy got the bulging net above the level of the bulwark, streams of water running out of it and reducing its weight somewhat.

Seizing the bottom rope, he pulled the net in, the boat righting, then he let the whole mass down into the well on top of the other fish, and it bulged over on being released.

Tom was in great glee, for he had obtained a full load, while the fleet itself had caught practically nothing.

The early bird had got the worm that morning for fair.

CHAPTER V.

TOM HEARS OF A STEEPLE-JACK JOB.

Tom, of course, had to remain at anchor waiting for a breeze to take him back to the cove where he and his mother would have a job cleaning the fish.

The bulk of his catch would have to go to the cannery at the wholesale price, for he could only dispose of a certain quantity in the village, and the hotel was not open yet, as it was only the early part of June.

As the calm seemed likely to last some time yet, Tom went forward, got out an empty tub from under the half deck, and placing it where he could straddle it with a board for a seat, he started in to clean as many of the tub fish as he could.

Previous to doing this he had hoisted the mainsail far enough to shade his main catch of mackerel from the sun.

Tom was an expert fish cleaner, as was also his mother, and he worked rapidly in order to accomplish as much as he could while the calm lasted.

The more fish he cleaned out there on the Shoals the less he and his mother would have to do when he got back, and as time was money to him, every moment counted.

Not until eleven was there any signs of a breeze, then it came from the northeast, the most favorable quarter for Tom to make his run back.

At first only cat's-paws ruffled the surface of the ocean, fanning Tom's cheeks for a moment, and dying out.

Then it gradually became steady.

The young fisherman hoisted the mainsail the rest of the way, set his jib and got his anchor up, which consisted of a four-pronged grapnell.

Making his way to the narrow cockpit, he seized the tiller and brought the boat's head around to her course.

This carried him close to half of the fishing fleet and gave the other fishermen, who were now under slow headway again, a sight of his load of speckled beauties.

They viewed his catch with feelings of envy.

It was small compared with what most of them were able to take aboard, but large when they had got none themselves.

"Hello, Morris," shouted one skipper, "you've been lucky this morning."

"Yes. That's because I got on the ground in time to get them."

"You must have taken all there were around here, for when we came up we couldn't get a bite."

"Heavens! there were millions on the Shoal when I cast anchor. They grabbed at my bait as though they were starved. Had you people been on hand at the same time you would have got half a load at least before they skipped out."

"Say, do you want a job when you get rid of your fish?" said the skipper.

"A job!" cried Tom, running closer to the other boat and coming up in the wind. "What do you mean?"

"One of the trustees of the Ridgeway Methodist Church was over to the village yesterday afternoon looking for an expert climber to do a steeple-jack act. They want the ball at the top of the spire regilded. They can't find a painter in the town willing to go up for any price, so they came after a sailor. I told him if he didn't find a man, to call on you. Well, he made a deal with Ben Blake for \$15, and Ben was to have gone over this morning, but he backed out, or his wife made him, so the job is still open. If you want to tackle the job, go over and call on John Andrews, who lives in the same block with the church. You might call at the minister's house first, and he will send somebody with you to Mr. Andrews. It's a chance to make \$15, and the job won't take you long once you reach the ball," said the skipper.

"How high is that gilt ball from the ground?" asked Tom, in an interested tone.

"One hundred and fifty feet, more or less."

"I suppose the climb begins at the foot of the steeple?"

"Of course. You wouldn't expect to crawl up the side of the church, would you?" grinned the skipper.

"No, but I might do it in a pinch."

"Yes, if you had wings."

"My hands and feet are good enough. You've been in the Mouse Trap?"

"Yes, when the tide was out."

"Do you think you could climb out if the tide closed the entrance?"

"No, nor anybody else."

"I could."

"Get out."

"Yesterday I climbed up the inside of the Mouse Trap to the shelf where the tree is, eighty feet above the pool."

"You did?"

"I did."

"Tell that to the Horse Marines."

"You don't believe me?"

"No."

"Bob Jones was there and saw me do it. Nellie Dare also knows I reached the shelf."

"If you really did that I don't wonder Lawless calls you the Human Fly. I don't see how you ever got up the first thirty feet. It's as smooth as glass."

"It isn't as smooth as you think, but it's a tough climb, just the same."

"If you climbed to the shelf in the Mouse Trap, that steeple ought to be a cinch for you. It inclines inward to a point, like all steeples, and has six ridges strung all the way up with fancy cleats. With a rope for a support you can get up to the ball as easy as winking."

"And yet Ben Blake wouldn't risk it?"

"He isn't as much of a human fly as you are," laughed the captain. "Good-by. If you tackle the steeple your name will be in all the papers in the county."

The boats drew apart, and Tom continued on his way home.

As he approached the shore he caught a flash of light on the cliff.

Looking in that direction he saw a man with a telescope up there.

The flash was the reflection of the sun's rays on the brass band or the glass end.

The man was stretched out at full length at the edge of the cliff, and Tom would not have noticed him but for the flash.

"There he is again," thought Tom. "He seems to be looking at me. I wonder what in thunder he's trying to find out?"

As conjecture was useless, the boy gave the matter up.

There was no reason, in his mind, why the man should be particularly interested in him.

The little sloop made straight for the cove, and Tom soon lost sight of the man with the telescope.

As the wind had freshened after Tom left the Shoal, he made a quick run of it.

His mother did not expect him back so soon, owing to the calm, which she expected would interfere with his getting a full load of fish.

Nevertheless, she occasionally swept the sea with a small spyglass she had, and on one of these occasions she made out the little sloop heading for the cove.

That was a sign he had been lucky, and she smiled with satisfaction, for she saw more dollars coming to increase her private store of savings.

She was down at the cove when Tom ran the sloop in.

"You've got a fine load, Tom," she said, her eyes snapping as she viewed the crowded state of the boat.

"Yes, mother, I was particularly lucky," he answered. "I got this catch before the fleet arrived, though the boats started for the Shoal about the same time I did. The extra mile they had to cover made all the difference in the world with them. I reached the ground just as it fell calm, and found the place alive with mackerel. The fleet got as far as the edge of the Shoal, and were becalmed there. There were fish around them then, but before they could get their nets out the school disappeared and so they got badly left."

"Good! I like to see them disappointed once in a while," said the woman.

"You oughtn't to say that, mother, particularly after I have been so successful," said Tom.

"Why not?" she replied with some energy. "Don't their women look down on me because I live out here and have no style? Do any of them ever call on me to pass the time of day, or ask after my health? Not one. I hate the whole brood. I dare say I could buy and sell half of them, with all the airs they put on. One of these fine days I'll show them a thing or two that they don't suspect. I'll build a house in the village that'll take the shine out of them, and put on fine clothes and airs myself. Then they'll call to see me, I dare say; but I won't see one of the hussies. I'll shut the door in their faces and laugh at their chagrin."

Mrs. Morris rubbed her thin, brown hands together as she pictured the revenge she hoped to take some day on those who now turned their backs upon her.

Then she fell to work over a tub of uncleaned fish which her son had brought and placed on the beach.

Tom seldom paid any attention to his mother's vagaries.

While he knew she was saving every cent she did not actually need, he did not figure that the total sum she had accumulated amounted to much more than two or three hundred dollars at the outside.

In his estimation there was little chance of her saving enough to build a good, substantial cottage and putting on the style she often hinted at.

As Tom started in cleaning the fish, too, he happened to glance up at the top of the cliff.

There stood the man with the spyglass looking down at them.

"Hang him! I wish he'd keep away. He's got no right to be spying upon us," he muttered.

He said nothing to his mother about the man, who presently disappeared, but went on with his work.

At the end of an hour his mother left him to prepare dinner, and when it was ready she called him to it.

Two tubs of fish were more than enough to supply the village.

The rest was dumped back into the well, and by two o'clock Tom sailed for the wharf of the cannery at the village, a mile and a quarter from the cove by water.

When he got there the fish was inspected and weighed, and an order given him on the cashier for his money.

He collected the sum coming to him and took it home to his mother.

Then he loaded the two tubs of his best fish on a handcart and started for the village to peddle it around.

It was after dark when he returned with about enough left to furnish a few messes for himself and his mother.

While he was eating his supper a knock came at the door.

His mother opened the door and two men walked in.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WRECKED AEROPLANE.

One of the visitors Tom recognized as a fisherman named Ben Blake.

The other was a well-dressed stranger.

"How d'ye do, Tom," said Blake. "This here is Mr. Andrews, of Ridgeway. He wants to have a talk with you, so I fetched him over."

"Help yourselves to chairs," said Tom. "I can guess your errand, sir," added the boy to Andrews; "you are looking for a good climber to gild the ball on your church."

"Yes. You heard I came here yesterday on that errand?"

"Cap'n Barry, of the sloop Nancy, told me this morning at the Shoals. He said that Blake here had agreed to do the work, and then backed out of it."

"Mrs. Blake kind of objected to me doing of it," said Ben, looking a bit sheepish.

"I have been told that you are a remarkably smart climber," said Mr. Andrews, "as good as any steeple-jack; so I came to offer you the work. We'll pay you \$15."

"When do you want it done?"

"Right away, if possible. The ball has been looking shabby for some time."

"It would hardly pay me to put in my time for \$15 while the mackerel are off this coast. I brought in a load to-day which netted me four or five times that sum. I hope to repeat to-morrow."

"When could you undertake the work?" said Andrews.

"I might be able to do it in a week—just as soon as the mackerel school runs off to the east'ard. I could spare a day, then, and follow the fish on the following day."

"Very well. Shall we look for you a week from to-day? Here is my address in Ridgeway. The church is in the same block. Our painter will show you how to gild the ball when you get to it. He will furnish all the rope you need, and a swinging board for you to sit on while doing the work."

"I'd rather bring my own rig. I have a regular bo'sun's chair that belonged to my father."

"All right."

"I may not be there Monday, but some day during the week. Then again I may possibly get over on Saturday. Anyway, I'll come as soon as I can," said Tom.

Mr. Andrews was satisfied, and he and Blake took their departure.

Tom and the other fishermen made good hauls on the Shoals during the rest of the week, but on Monday not a mackerel was to be found on the grounds.

The young fisherman returned to the cove with a small catch of other fish, about half enough to supply his regular customers.

Those who expected to get mackerel from him would be disappointed.

The fleet had left Tom on the Shoals and gone east in search of the school.

The boats returned next morning with full cargoes, having overtaken the fish.

Tom saw them coming in one by one as he was loading his steeple-jack rig on his hand-cart.

Ridgeway was only three miles distant, and Tom had arranged with the postmaster's son to pull the cart behind his light wagon when he went for the morning mail to the railroad station on the outskirts of the town.

He did not worry about the return trip, for he never crossed a bridge till he came to one.

Shortly after nine o'clock Tom appeared with his cart in front of Mr. Andrews' house.

That gentleman had gone to his business, but had left word with his wife that he was to be notified over the 'phone when Tom showed up.

His wife called him up on the wire.

He said he would come right away, and in the meanwhile would communicate with the painter, and have him or one of his men meet Tom at the church, where the boy was directed to go and wait.

Tom, while waiting, took a good view of the steeple and saw that it was a tolerably tall one.

The church was one of the finest edifices in Ridgeway, and there was quite a bit of gingerbread work about the spire.

Twenty minutes later the painter drove up in his wagon with the gilding material and a dummy ball.

In the basement of the church the man instructed Tom how to gild the ball.

By the time the young fisherman had learned his lesson, Mr. Andrews appeared.

The caretaker of the church was with him.

"It's something of a feat you are about to undertake, young man," said Mr. Andrews. "You are sure that your nerve is equal to it?"

"You needn't worry about my nerve," replied the boy. "I did some climbing a week ago Sunday that I fancy was harder than this steeple is likely to prove. I had no rope, either, to sustain myself, but had to depend on my fingers and stocking feet. I went up eighty feet on the sheer face of the cliff to a ledge, and by doing so I saved the life of a young lady."

"Our steeple is about sixty feet high, but it begins about eighty feet from the ground, so that when you reach the ball you will find yourself some distance up in the air. I suppose you will go up first and then send a rope down for your seat and the gilding material?"

"Yes, that's what I'll do. The base of operations will be in the belfry, I guess?"

"Yes. We will go up there now."

The entire party started up the narrow stairs—Tom carrying the rope, the caretaker his bo'sun's chair, and the painter the gilding material.

Reaching the belfry, Tom proceeded to get his rope in shape.

He attached a coil of thin line to his waist.

This was to be utilized after he reached the ball to draw up his seat and the gilding material.

The rope on which the boy was to depend for support on his way up was one he had submitted to a severe test.

In one end he had made a loop.

The other end had to be passed around the steeple and then through the loop.

To accomplish this the end had to be flung around the four sides of the belfry, from window to window—no small feat in itself.

Tom stood at the first window, and the painter went to the second, at a right angle with the first.

The boy flung the rope upward and around.

The coil hit the slanting spire above the window, slipped down and dropped on the other side of it.

The painter pulled the end in.

Tom recoiled it and made his second fling for the next window.

In this way the rope was got around above the windows.

While this work was in progress the party caught sight of an aeroplane approaching the town.

They stopped to watch the machine for a few minutes, and then completed the job.

Hundreds of people in the streets of the town were watching the flight of the air-ship.

When it got over the business section not so very far from the church, the aeronaut began showing off what he could do.

The machine swooped down and then rose up, just like a bird.

It went around in circles and performed other stunts that air men are wont to indulge in to show off their skill.

Suddenly it swung around in a wide circle and made a dive right at the steeple of the church.

The man tried to steer the machine aside.

Heretofore this had been an easy thing for him to do.

It probably would have been easy then had not the mechanism of the steering gear gone wrong.

The result was he lost control of the machine, and it collided with the top of the steeple, entangling itself in the ball and upper part of the spire, and throwing the aeronaut out of his seat.

Instead of falling to the ground, as he had every chance of doing, his body was caught by one of the arms or wings of the machine.

There he hung senseless, like a limp rag, rising and falling with the swaying movement of the wreck.

A crowd of people, augmented each moment, gazed upward in horror at the peril he was in, expecting every moment to see his body drop like a stone through the air.

Tom and the rest of the party in the belfry could not help seeing the catastrophe.

Indeed, when the aeroplane hit the steeple the shock was so heavy that the spire swayed to and fro on its foundation.

"I'll have to save that man if I can," said Tom; "but it's going to be some job, for he's hanging several feet out from the steeple."

He took the thin line from his waist and made a lasso of one end.

His purpose was to throw the loop around the aeronaut's head and shoulders.

It appeared to be the only way he could be saved.

Tom told the painter what he intended to do, and asked his help to make the plan successful.

Gripping the rope looped around the steeple, Tom dragged himself to the top of the window frame.

He was almost near enough to the unconscious aeronaut to seize his down-hanging arms.

The broken aeroplane was moving up and down dangerously.

The crowd below eagerly and hopefully watched the boy's movements.

When the arm of the machine swung downward it brought the aeronaut close to where the boy clung against the spire.

Taking instant advantage of this chance, Tom easily threw the loop over the man's head, and it dropped below his arms.

When the arm rose the loop tightened about the aeronaut and pulled him off it.

He did not fall far, for Tom had a tight grip on the line.

He bumped against the side of the steeple, and Tom swung him around in front of the window.

The painter grabbed him and pulled him inside the belfry.

And so his life was saved by the young steeple-jack.

CHAPTER VII.

A TICKLISH JOB.

The aeronaut was taken downstairs and an ambulance sent for.

In the meantime the aeroplane continued to seesaw the air at the top of the spire.

Until it was removed Tom could not perform the work he had been hired for.

The question that agitated Mr. Andrews was, how was it to be removed?

If the wind increased in force the machine was likely to play the dickens with the spire.

Not only that, but it was likely to fall either into the street or upon the roof of one of the adjoining houses, or into the yard.

In any event it was liable to do considerable damage even if nobody was hurt.

Mr. Andrews, while waiting for the ambulance to call for the senseless aeronaut, who failed to revive under ordinary treatment, telephoned the facts to the police department, suggesting that officers be sent to the church right away to clear the street of the increasing crowd.

The ambulance and the police arrived about the same time.

The surgeon brought the man to his senses, and on examination it was found that he was not injured beyond a number of bruises.

He declined to go to the hospital for a more thorough over-

hauling, declaring that he was all right and needed no treatment.

When he learned how Tom had saved him from his perilous position, he expressed his gratitude to the boy, and said he wouldn't forget what he had done.

He gave his name as John Denby, and stated that he had started his aerial flight from Belfast.

The police cleared the street in the immediate vicinity of the church, and the occupants of the houses were warned that the wrecked aeroplane was liable to fall at any time.

The officer in charge of the police took part in the consultation concerning how the machine was to be removed from the steeple without damage to the surrounding property.

The aeronaut gave a general description of his aeroplane, stating what its weight was and other particulars.

Tom was asked if he would climb up and take a look at it, and see how it was attached to the point of the spire.

The aeronaut agreed to pay him \$50 if he would do it.

Under the circumstances Tom would have gone up for nothing, but he did not refuse the money, for the trip might prove a dangerous one to him.

At any rate there was nobody else to undertake the feat, and he was in the position to make his own price had he been so disposed.

The party returned to the belfry, accompanied by the officer and a patrolman.

Tom made his preparations, and then started to make his way up the steeple.

Owing to the fancy cleats which ornamented the six ridges of the spire, he found that the ascent was not so very difficult with the aid of the rope thrown around it; but these cleats would prevent him from descending with the rope, for the rope could not pass them in a downward direction.

Recognizing that fact, another coil of rope had been sent for to enable him to descend, which in this way he could do with ease, even without the aid of the cleats to step on.

When Tom got two-thirds of the way up he saw that the aeroplane was pretty firmly anchored on the point of the spire, which shot up several feet through the open part behind the aeronaut's seat, and about midway between the two pair of wheels the machine rested on when it was on the ground.

These wheels were necessary to give that type of aeroplane its flying start, and without that it could not rise into the air.

Tom found that what the fisherman called a smacking breeze was blowing up at the top of the spire, and it caused the aeroplane to rock on its aerial perch.

It rocked both sidewise and forward and back, and its movements had already torn off a number of the fancy cleats and damaged the woodwork of the spire.

Tom went as high as he dared, which was pretty close to the bottom of the machine, and took note of the way it was stuck, like a huge fly on the point of a pin.

As far as he could make out the aeroplane was not materially damaged, but it would have to be broken up to get it down.

How this was to be accomplished was a problem for the owner to solve.

Ropes would have to be brought up there and attached to different sections before the aeroplane was disjoined.

It was a job that would require the service of several men.

As Tom went up the steeple he naturally had to haul in his supporting rope as the circumference of the spire grew less.

Not being able to reach the narrow point under the ball, he had to fasten the rope at the highest point he felt it prudent to venture.

When he had done this he tied his descending rope to the loop so that it hung down beside one of the ridges of cleats.

He had taken the precaution to put knots in the ropes two feet apart, for greater security, though really he did not absolutely need such help, for he was accustomed to climb up and down a rope hand over hand.

It was as easy as rolling off a log for him to return to the window of the belfry from which he started, and equally as easy to climb up to the loop again.

He made his report to Mr. Andrews and the rest of the party.

From it they judged that there was no immediate danger of the aeroplane falling from its perch unless torn apart by the wind.

At the same time they realized that its removal was a serious matter.

Although the young steeple-jack was willing to help all he could, he said he could do nothing with the machine alone.

"I've got the rope secured a short distance under the aeroplane, so it's easy to go up and down for any one with the

right nerve," said Tom. "I don't think anything can be done till the machine stops rocking, and it won't stop till the wind drops."

It was suggested that the owner go up with Tom's help and see what could be done with his aeroplane, but Denby declined on the ground that after the accident he was not in shape to undertake any risk.

The police officer said that something must be done, for the wreck was a standing menace to life and property in that neighborhood, and that in spite of the fact that it appeared to be well anchored on the spire, there was no certainty about how long it would remain intact.

He thought ropes ought to be attached to various parts of it without delay, and that an active young steeple-jack like Tom should be able to do the work.

"I'm ready to take the risk if I'm paid for it," said Tom; "but I wouldn't do it under \$100."

Then Denby said:

"I'll give you \$100 in addition to the \$50 you've already earned by going up and looking at the aero."

"Make it \$100 altogether."

"All right if you're satisfied."

"Who's going to furnish the ropes?"

"I suppose I'll have to do it, as I'm responsible for the condition of things," said Denby.

Nothing could be done until the rope was brought, and the owner of the aeroplane went off with Tom to get it.

An hour elapsed before the rope was delivered at the church, and during that time the wind had grown fresher.

The foreman of the nearest fire-engine house had been sent for and consulted about sending a couple of his men to help the young steeple-jack.

As the removal of the air-ship was a matter of public concern, the foreman said he would send over two of his nerviest men.

These men were on hand when the rope came with Tom and Denby in the wagon.

The aeroplane was now cavorting at a livelier rate than ever, and a circus job faced Tom and the two firemen.

The boy went up first to the place he reached before and attached a second knotted rope a couple of feet from the first one.

Since he had been up there the first time the machine had settled down close to the looped rope.

A score of fancy cleats had been dislodged from their places, so that the spire looked bare for a yard or so around the aeroplane.

Nothing had happened to the weather-beaten gilt ball as far as Tom could see.

Watching his chance, Tom cautiously got a rope around one of the hollow steel parts of the machine.

Swinging out into the air, with nothing between him and the ground, he pulled himself up into the wreck with the ease of a monkey.

He sent down a coil of thin line for the rope needed to make the lashings, and hauled it up.

He crawled out on the tail piece of the machine, which rose and fell at an acute angle like a seesaw.

It was like getting out on the skysail of a ship that was rolling from starboard to port in a small gale, only the altitude was very much higher.

Tom, being a natural sailor, did not mind the work a bit, but the spectators in the street below, and at the windows, and on the roofs of the houses, held their breath as they watched his indistinct figure half concealed in the apparatus working outward till it stopped at the point he decided to attach one of the stout ropes.

Having accomplished the first part of his work, he returned to the spire.

There he made the other end of the rope fast and cut off the slack.

He repeated the work on each of the side arms, and then tackled the front part.

That done, he went over the same job at a point midway between the spire and the first four ropes.

That was all he could do.

In the meanwhile the owner of the machine had been instructing the two firemen how they could best separate the four sections of the aeroplane.

Tom signaled that he was ready for them, and the tools were sent up by the thin line.

The two firemen followed.

The three lashed themselves to the spire and got busy.

It was some job they had on their hands, but they went about it with energy and coolness.

Nuts had to be removed and braces loosened, and other work done.

Suddenly the tail of the aeroplane sagged and the workers drew back.

Up went the tail in the air, then down.

Its unsupported end bent like a piece of cardboard crumbling up, and the connections snapped.

It hit the spire with a bang and hung supported by the ropes.

Work was then begun on the front part, which hung down at an angle of forty-five degrees.

Two hours passed before this was detached and fell against the spire.

It was late in the afternoon when the second wing followed its companion, and then only the central part of the machine remained glued to the point of the steeple.

It was safe to stay there until taken apart.

The next thing was to rig a heavy block to the spire and lower the four detached sections one by one.

The first section was lowered as far as the belfry, where another block was fixed with fresh rope, and then it was let down to the street.

The second and third sections were lowered in like manner on either side of the church where there was an open space, and the last section was dropped on the back of the church and slid off on one side.

By that time it was nearly dark, and nothing further could be done.

Tom left his cart in the basement of the church and walked to the railroad station, where he was in time to connect with the rig of the postmaster's son, who was waiting there for the evening mail to arrive.

Within an hour Tom reached the cove with a fine appetite for his supper.

CHAPTER VIII.

LIQUOR SMUGGLING.

When Tom described his day's experience to his mother she expressed no concern about the risk he had taken.

She seemed to regard it as a matter of course, for she knew he was an expert climber.

What interested her most was the \$100 he had been promised for his share in the work.

"Are you sure you'll get all that?" she asked eagerly.

"I guess there's no doubt about it. I saved the man's life, so I hardly think he'll try to cheat me out of my price."

"Good!" she said, rubbing her hands together. "It's better than fishing. And you are to get \$15 more for gilding the ball?"

"That's the arrangement I made with Mr. Andrews."

"Ah, we're getting rich fast," she said, in a tone of satisfaction. "It's pleasant to think about it. The day is coming when I'll take some folks down a peg or two. How their eyes will stick out when I go around like a real lady, which they never can be with all their airs that amount to nothing. That will be my revenge, and it will be a fine one."

She chuckled and rubbed her hands together again.

Tom did not sympathize with these exhibitions on her part, but she was his mother, and he never made any remark one way or the other.

Apparently she did not expect him to, so his silence did not affect her.

Next morning Tom rode to Ridgeway again with the postmaster's son.

He found men at work at the church taking the sections of the aeroplane apart for transportation to Belfast.

"Mr. Denby's aerial trip was likely to cost him a pretty penny in the end, but having been so lucky as to escape with only a few minor bruises, he did not mind that, particularly as he was able to foot the bill."

Tom decided to go up and gild the ball before helping the two firemen to remove the last of the air-ship from the steeple.

As the framework which still clung to the spire offered a safe platform for a carpenter to work on, Mr. Andrews decided to let it remain there until the broken-off cleats were replaced and painted.

This couldn't be done that day, so when Tom had finished with the ball he was paid for his work and told he could go home.

Denby paid him the \$100 and presented him with a fine gold watch and chain for saving his life.

At the same time he gave the boy his address in Belfast, and told him if he ever wanted a favor, to write or call on him.

"I'm going out after mackerel in the morning, so if you want me to help get down the rest of your air-ship, you'll have to send word over to the cove when you want me," said Tom.

"We may be able to get along without you," said Denby. "I think the two firemen will be able to finish the work in short order. At any rate, the rest of the machine won't be touched for two or three days, until the carpenter has made the repairs."

So Tom returned to the cove and handed his mother the \$125.

She told him the man with the spyglass had been around asking for him.

"What does he want with me?" he asked.

"He didn't say. I told him you were doing steeple-jack work in Ridgeway, but I expected you would be home this afternoon. He said he would call after dark."

"He's been hanging around here several days now. I wonder what's his object."

His mother chuckled as if pleased at something.

Tom looked at her, then turned on his heels and walked out to get his boat ready for the morning trip.

He expected to be gone all next day, for the mackerel school had gone some distance east.

He had the little sloop washed out and everything in shape by the time his mother called him to supper.

"I think I can guess what the man wants to see you about," said his mother during the meal.

"Tell me."

"He's a revenue officer and is looking for liquor smugglers."

"Why, I haven't heard of any liquor being ashore here for a year or more—not since the Brisson crowd were caught at it, and all but Brisson himself sent to prison," said Tom, in surprise.

His mother chuckled.

"About three weeks ago you told me that you saw three lights against the face of the cliff, in the direction of the village, about midnight."

"That's right."

"One of the lights was a red one and higher than the other two, which were white."

"Yes," nodded her son.

"And you said it looked like a signal, though you couldn't see why anybody should be signaling on such a dark night."

"Do you mean to say that was somebody on shore that was signaling a liquor smuggler?"

"That's the old Brisson signal."

"It is, eh? Then that French rascal, after escaping and lying low for over a year, is at his old tricks again?"

"I suspect he is, or somebody else is imitating him."

"Do you think liquor was landed the night I saw the lights?" His mother shrugged her shoulders.

"Do you know the meaning of the signal I saw—a red light above two white ones?"

"How should I know the meaning of it?" said his mother, in a furtive tone.

"True. It might have meant the coast is clear."

"It doesn't mean anything of the kind," said Mrs. Morris, sharply.

Tom looked curiously at his mother.

"How can you say that when you have just denied that you have any knowledge of the meaning of the signal? Why shouldn't it mean that the coast was clear for the landing of liquor? And perhaps liquor was landed that night."

"It's nothing to us what the signal meant."

"That's true enough, mother, we have no interest in the liquor smuggling business."

"So it behooves you to be cautious what you say to that officer when he calls to see you to-night."

"He won't learn much from me, because I don't know anything on the subject. All I can tell him is about that signal."

"Don't say a word about it."

"Why not?"

"The officer has been hanging around here two or three days. That's enough to show he's suspicious of us."

"Why should he suspect us?"

"Because we live out here in this lonesome spot."

"But we've always lived here as long as I can remember."

"There's another reason."

"What is it?"

"Give a dog a bad name and it will stick to him."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Many years ago, when you were small, your father was arrested as an accomplice of a St. John's liquor smuggler."

"This is the first I ever heard about it."

"He was released because there was not enough evidence to convict him."

"He was not guilty, was he, mother?"

"The Government believed he was. Until the day of his death he rested under suspicion."

"Well, what has that to do with us?"

"When Brisson attempted to land his third cargo fifteen months ago, the Revenue people were on the watch. Brisson signaled his presence off the coast. One of his shore friends, aware of the trap waiting for him, started to show the usual warning signal. Unfortunately, she was caught in the act."

"She! It was a woman, then?"

His mother looked momentarily confused, then recovered herself and went on.

"She was caught before she could give the warning, and the choice given her to show the signal that all was clear or go to jail and face disgrace."

"She must have accepted the bribe, because the smugglers were caught with the goods, and no woman was mixed up in the case."

"She accepted the least of the two evils, gave the signal the revenue men wanted displayed, and—well, you know the result."

"Well, mother, all that cannot affect us."

"Yes, it can, and it does."

"How?"

"The revenue officer who is nosing around this locality suspects that I was the woman who tried to warn Brisson off that night, and would have done so if I hadn't been caught."

"Why should he suspect you when you never had anything to do with the smuggling business in your life?"

"These Government sleuths would suspect their own brother or sister on the slightest provocation."

"But they've no right to suspect you. If that chap hints a word about you to me, I'll smash him."

"The easiest way is the best. Don't say anything about having seen that signal. If you do it will make trouble for us."

"I don't see why it should."

"I want you to do as I tell you. I am your mother, and you owe me obedience. I order you to forget that you saw the signal."

"If he asks me if I saw lights along the cliffs——"

"You're to say no."

"That would be telling a lie, mother, and that goes against my grain."

"No matter. He must not learn that the signal was shown. Unless he can find somebody who saw the lights and will admit it, he will have no evidence that liquor has been landed again on this shore."

"Mother, can it be that you are in sympathy with those who try to smuggle liquor into this State?"

"If I chose to favor them, that's my business."

"How will you benefit by doing so? To try to smuggle anything into this country on which there is a duty is unlawful. Why sympathize with lawbreakers?"

"I am not going to argue the matter with you. I have my own views, and you have yours. If you would ward off trouble from us, be as silent as the grave about the signal. Remember, it is my wish."

"All right, mother. What you say goes with me," said Tom, getting up from the table and walking outside on the shelf.

It was then about dusk.

Coming down the path which led from the top of the cliffs the boy saw the man with the spyglass.

CHAPTER IX.

THE REVENUE OFFICER.

Tom waited for the man whom his mother had informed him was a revenue officer to approach.

"Good-evening, young man," said the stranger, civilly.

"Good-evening. I understand you want to see me?" said the boy.

"I want to ask you a question or two."

"Heave ahead. But first I'd like to know who you are."

"I'm a Government officer. My name is Duffy."

"Are you connected with the revenue service?"

"I am."

"Your presence her, I take it, indicates that the Government has reason to believe that liquor smuggling has been renewed in this vicinity?"

"We have evidence pointing to the landing of a quantity of kegs of French cognac brought from St. Johns, New Foundland, recently."

"Well, I don't know anything about the matter. Neither does my mother. The liquor, if it was landed in this neighborhood, was not brought into this cove, that's certain."

"You are sure of that, eh?"

"I am reasonably sure of it. Had it been fetched here we would probably have had some evidence of the fact, in which case we would have considered it our duty to report the fact."

"Look here, young man, you've lived in this cove nearly all your life."

"Make it all my life and you'll hit it. I was born here."

"You were born here?" said the officer, looking hard at the boy.

"I was."

"Sure of that, eh?"

"Certainly I am. My mother told me so, and she ought to know."

"Then your knowledge of the fact is based on her statement?"

"How else? No one of his own knowledge remembers when and where he was born."

"That's true enough. So you believe you were born here?"

"I guess there is no doubt about it. I have positive evidence that my father and mother lived here for some years before I was born. They came here, and my father built this house, about the time of their marriage, and they never lived anywhere else. However, that's a matter you can't be interested in."

"That's right, too. So you really believe that——"

The speaker broke off abruptly and stared fixedly into the boy's face.

"What I was going to say is this: you are familiar enough with this part of the shore to know that the only comparatively easy way to reach the top of these cliffs for ten miles this side of Bird Point, at the entrance to the harbor, is by way of this cove," continued the officer.

"I am aware of that," nodded Tom.

"So that if a score or two of liquor kegs were landed hereabouts, the party who received them would naturally carry them away by the path through the cove. Isn't that common sense?"

"I'll admit that your argument is good," admitted Tom.

"Very good. According to advices received from St. John, forty kegs of cognac were shipped, with other lading, aboard the schooner Jean Dubosc, which cleared in proper shape for the port of Boston. The vessel in question reached Boston in due course and discharged her cargo. No cognac was on board, nor did her manifest show she had brought any. Nevertheless, the forty kegs were the last things put aboard of her at her wharf in St. Johns, and she sailed a short time afterward. The question which interests the Government is what became of those kegs?"

"The Government suspects they were landed in this neighborhood on the quiet, I suppose? And the suspicion arises from the fact that a Frenchman named Brisson was caught at the game some fifteen months ago—that is, his associates were nabbed and imprisoned, but he managed to escape himself," said Tom.

"That fact, of course, has something to do with the case in hand. But we have something more tangible than mere suspicion, my lad. We have the testimony of a credible witness who saw the landing of the kegs."

"Who is the witness?"

"Never mind who he is. We will produce him when the time comes."

"Did that person say he saw the kegs brought into our cove?"

"He did."

"At what hour of the night?"

"It was after midnight."

"As the kegs would have to be brought up to this shelf first before reaching the path, and as the work could not have been carried on in absolute silence, it seems to me that either my mother or myself would have heard the sounds. We are both light sleepers."

A grin flickered across the sunburned features of the officer.

"You heard nothing on the night in question, which was nearly three weeks ago?" he said.

"Nothing at all at any time, unless it is the waves at high tide breaking on the rocks below."

"Do you go to bed early as a rule?"

"Yes, particularly since the fishing season set in, for I have to be up by daybreak to go out in my sloop."

"Your mother retires early also, I suppose?"

"She does, for she is up before me to prepare my breakfast."

"The landing of the kegs was made on the beach below the cove, toward the village. It was done about low tide, for the kegs could not have been carried into this cove after the tide got three-quarters full. That is clear to you, eh?"

"Yes. But they could have been hoisted to the top of the cliffs at any place between here and Bird Point."

"They could, but that would have been quite a job, which would have called for tackle. Men engaged in such work would naturally follow the line of the least resistance—meaning they would take the easiest route. The cove offers that."

"Admitting all these facts to be true, in what way does the surreptitious landing of a quantity of liquor kegs affect my mother or myself? We are not responsible for the acts of others. The smugglers had no right to make use of this cove, for we are in possession of it, but it is not likely they would consult us on the subject. Such work is always done in secret to avoid discovery."

"Well, young man, I do not believe you had anything to do with the job. I have thoroughly investigated your character in the village, and find you bear an excellent reputation. I have also learned a thing or two about you which it appears you are ignorant of yourself."

"What is that?" asked Tom, in surprise.

"I'd rather not say, as the facts are not generally known, which, I dare say, accounts for you not being acquainted with them. The matter does not reflect upon you in any way, so you need not worry. You will probably discover everything in time. Frankly, I think you ought to know, but it isn't my place to tell you anything. Your mother should do that."

"How do you know but my mother has told me?"

"If she has, why did you affect ignorance of your real——"

The officer paused irresolutely.

"What are you talking about? You did not bring the matter up before."

The man eyed Tom sharply.

"Go on," he said. "What do you think I am referring to?"

"My mother told me that when Brisson landed his last cargo here fifteen months ago—the one that was nabbed by the revenue people, and which broke up the business—that a woman accomplice on shore started to warn him of his danger by the usual signal, but was caught doing it. She was let off on condition that she flashed the 'all clear' signal in place of the other. She did so, and the smugglers and their cargo were in consequence captured."

"Your mother told you that, eh?" said the officer, with an odd look.

"Yes."

"Well?"

"She told me that you suspect she was the woman in question, and that is the reason you have been hanging around this place for the last few days."

"So."

"Well, you want to take a reef in your suspicions, Mr. Duffy. I want you to understand that my mother never has had any connection or sympathy with Brisson and his smuggling crowd. If she had had any leaning that way, I think I would have known it. Besides, she wouldn't have helped the rascals without being well paid for the risk she ran. Now as I know my mother has very little money, and is dependent on my exertions for her living, it stands to reason that she could have had nothing to do with those smugglers. So I won't stand for you or anybody else making libelous cracks at her. I want you to understand that. My mother may not be a lady—that isn't her fault—but she's my mother, and I shall defend her against the world," said Tom, resolutely.

The officer watched the boy intently while he spoke.

"If he didn't relish Tom's straight-from-the-shoulder remarks he gave no sign of it."

"So you are sure that your mother never stood in with the smugglers?"

"Of course I'm sure of it," said Tom, stoutly.

"Never heard that your father had any dealings with them, either, eh?"

"No. He made his living as a fisherman."

"And he taught you to follow in his steps?"

"Yes."

"It seems to me that you are out for something better than that."

"I guess I could make a living as a steeple-jack, too."

"I heard you were considered a good climber, and that you have nerve; but it's a mighty risky calling, my lad. I wouldn't recommend it as a business."

"There appears to be good money in it. I earned \$125 yes—"

terday and this morning working on the steeple of the Methodist Church at Ridgeway."

"And I dare say you took your life in your hand while you were up there. The risk must have been considerable to get you that amount of money for a few hours' work."

"I didn't think about the risk. A fellow can't fall from any height if he holds on to something that won't give way. It was hard work getting an aeroplane apart way up in the air."

"What's that? An aeroplane on the steeple," said the man, who had not heard about the matter.

"Yes, it got caught on the spire and stuck there," said Tom, who then gave him a full account of the incident.

"Upon my word, that was some job for you and the firemen," he said.

"This morning I went up and gilded the ball on the top of the spire."

"That's regular steeple-jack work. Well, I must be going. By the way, there's an island out yonder in the center of the Shoals. Ever been ashore there?"

"Yes."

"I understand there's nothing on it but sand and scrub bushes?"

"You understand right."

"And that the sand shifts about."

"That's right, too."

"That's all. Good-night, my lad. I wish you well."

He walked off a few steps and stopped.

"One thing more," he said. "I've heard that your mother sometimes walks in her sleep—along the top of the cliffs toward the village. It's dangerous business in more ways than one. If I were you I'd try to break her of the habit."

"Who told you that ghost story? I never knew her to do such a thing."

"She doesn't do it often. Only when she's got something on her mind. She will probably deny it if you mention it, but it's a fact just the same. Good-night."

The revenue officer started up the path, leaving Tom looking after him.

CHAPTER X.

MORE STEEPLE-JACK WORK.

"You had a long talk with that chap," said Mrs. Morris when Tom re-entered the cottage. "What did he have to say to you?"

"He had a lot to say," answered the boy.

"Let me hear what it was about."

"It was chiefly about smuggling. He told me that the Government has a witness who saw a lot of kegs of cognac landed on the beach the night the three lights were flashed from the cliffs three weeks ago."

"Did he tell you who the witness was?"

"No. He declined to do that. The witness saw the kegs carried into the cove here."

Mrs. Morris uttered a shrill laugh of derision.

"Do you believe that?" she said.

"I denied that such a thing had taken place, but the man said it was true, because it was the easiest way to take the kegs to the top of the cliffs."

"The witness saw the kegs carried up the path, then?" grinned the woman.

"The officer didn't say, but I suppose he did."

"Did the witness see the signal and who flashed it?"

"The man said nothing about that."

"What else did he say?"

"He said he was satisfied I had nothing to do with the smuggling, for he had investigated my character in the village and found it to be all right. He told me one thing that puzzled and surprised me."

"What was that?"

"He said he had found out a thing or two about me which I seemed to be ignorant of."

Mrs. Morris gripped the table and looked uneasy.

"He told you what it was he heard, I suppose?"

"No, he did not, though I asked him. He said he thought I ought to know, and that it was your place to tell me."

"My place?"

"Yes. Have you any idea, mother, what he referred to?"

"No. If he heard anything about you that he didn't feel like telling you, depend on it there was nothing in it. If I had anything to tell you that you ought to know, you would have learned it long ago. There is no reason why I should keep anything from you."

"That's what I thought. The person who handed him the information was probably stringing him. There are some jokers in the village."

"I brought up the woman you told me was caught on the cliffs giving Brisson the warning signal just before the smugglers were captured, and who led them into the trap to save herself."

"Ah!" ejaculated his mother, "why did you do that?"

"Because you told me he suspected you to be that woman. I let him understand without any frills that I wouldn't stand to have you suspected of something you were not guilty of."

His mother laughed.

"The last thing he said was that he had heard you sometimes walked in your sleep along the cliffs. He said that was mighty dangerous business, and advised me to break you of it."

"Did you ever know me to walk in my sleep?" grinned his mother.

"No, and I told him so. Then he went away."

As the clock pointed at nine, Tom said it was nigh time they turned in, for they would have to get up at half-past four.

His mother nodded, and shortly afterward the cottage was dark.

Tom sailed away at sunrise next morning and was gone all day.

Dusk was coming on when his mother spied through her telescope the little sloop heading for the cove.

Tom had a fair load of mackerel aboard.

He told his mother that the fish was going further and further east and north earlier than usual, and he was afraid that his little boat would soon be out of the game, and that he would have to content himself with what he could catch on the Shoals.

"Well, it can't be helped," she replied, philosophically.

After supper they went down to the sloop, and under the light of a couple of lanterns cleaned the fish.

Three-quarters of his catch would go to the cannery, and this was thrown back into the well and covered with a piece of sailcloth.

Two tubs full of the choicest he intended to sell at retail, and these he sank in the water to keep fresh.

Next morning he sold the bulk of his catch to the cannery, after which he sailed back to the cove, put the two tubfuls in his cart and started for the village.

By the middle of the afternoon he had disposed of the last of his stock and returned home.

Next morning he started for the fishing ground again.

While he was away a messenger came from Mr. Andrews, saying that he was wanted in Ridgeway as soon as possible.

His mother told him when he got back that night with another fair load.

"I don't see how I can go until next week unless I was sure it would pay me," he said. "I suppose they want me to help take down the rest of that air-ship. They probably consider I have been paid to finish the job, so I would be out a day's fishing and the money my catch would bring."

After selling his fish next day he walked to Ridgeway to find out just what was wanted of him.

On calling upon Mr. Andrews he learned that the carpenter who had prepared the fancy cleats to match those on the steeple declined to climb up the spire to attach them in the places where they were needed.

"I want you to do it, Morris. It won't take you more than an hour at the outside, and I'll give you \$5 for the work. Then you and the firemen can detach the rest of the wreck from the spire and send it down to the belfry," said Andrews.

Tom said that as it wouldn't be dark for three hours, he guessed he'd put the cleats in place right away, for it would hardly pay him to come over specially for such a job.

While he was at work, Mr. Andrews could send word to the firemen to come over to attend to the piece of wreckage that remained to be taken down.

This arrangement being agreed to, Tom went up to the belfry, where he found the finished cleats, ready painted, tied in a bundle ready to be used.

The knotted ropes leading up to the loop near the top of the spire, as originally placed in position by Tom, the boy found still in place.

He tied a line to the bundle of cleats and placed them on the wide sill of the belfry window.

With a hammer stuck in one pocket and the other pocket full of the proper sized nails, he started up one of the ropes and soon reached the loop.

From the loop he got into the remnant of the air-ship.

Then he pulled up the bundle of cleats.

As the vacant spots where the new cleats were to go were all within his reach while standing or kneeling on the frame-

work of the aeroplane, the job he had in hand could be speedily executed.

He lost no time in getting at work, and was more than half through by the time the two firemen appeared.

They began work without interfering with him.

When he had put the last cleat in position he lent them a hand.

Before dark the last of the air-ship had been removed from the spire.

Tom remained up to take down the loop.

To do this and get down himself might seem like a difficult job.

It was not to a steeple-jack.

He disconnected one of the knotted ropes from the loop, made a small loop in the end of it, and hung it from a pointed cleat.

He did the same with the other rope.

Then he untied the big loop while holding on to one of the knotted ropes and drawing it clear of the spire to let it drop.

To descend all he had to do was to go down a couple of feet on the rope and attach the other knotted rope to a lower cleat.

Transferring his weight to that rope, he removed the other and attached the loop to a lower cleat, and so on alternately till he reached the window of the belfry.

As some of the rope belonged to him, Tom coiled it up in the belfry and said he would call for it when he could.

He started home on foot, but when a mile out of town was overtaken by the postmaster's son, who gave him a lift the rest of the way to the village.

A smart walk of fifteen minutes carried him to the cove.

He turned the \$5 he had earned over to his mother with the money he had received from the peddling of his fish, ate his supper, cleaned out his boat in readiness for next morning's trip to the fishing ground, and turned in.

CHAPTER XI.

TWO WHITE LIGHTS AND A RED.

When he turned out next morning he found a dull, leaden sky overhead.

A smart off-shore breeze was blowing.

He looked at the barometer which hung beside the cottage door, but it was stationary, and showed no indications of a storm brewing.

It didn't follow, however, that the instrument would not vary later.

Banking on its present looks, he put off in his sloop and joined the rest of the fishing fleet.

As the wind favored the larger craft, he was soon left behind.

The regular fishermen were at work an hour before he came up with them again in the midst of the school of mackerel.

The weather continued about the same all day.

All hands made a big catch, and then started back for Bayport.

That was close on to sundown.

The wind had increased in force and veered around to the eastward.

With a heavy load of mackerel aboard, in a comparatively open boat, and with night fast coming on, Tom began to fear that he was in for a tough trip.

He was not wrong.

As the waves rose higher his little craft rolled in a way that threatened to dump some of the cargo overboard.

He was forced to take a couple of reefs in his mainsail, and to accomplish that he had to come up into the wind to get his boom aboard, and then lash his tiller in position until he got back to it.

Fortunately, the wind did not exceed a small gale, and he got along very well after that.

As darkness fell he lost sight of the coast and the hindmost vessel of the fleet, which was steadily leaving him in the rear.

He steered largely by instinct, using his hand compass occasionally to correct his course if need be.

To see its face he used a wind match—a box of which he always carried with him on his trips.

The night was as black as ink, and even to Tom, accustomed as he was to the sea in all kinds of weather, it felt queer to be out in that small loaded boat, a mile from the shore, with nothing to rest his eyes on but the dark outline of the mainsail and the splashing of the water as it shot occasionally over the weather side of his little craft.

Still as long as the wind held steady he felt in no particular danger, for his boat was a stanch one, and he knew how to handle it.

Over two hours elapsed before he judged he was getting in the vicinity of the cove.

His gaze was fastened on the line of cliffs for the two white lights he knew his mother would show on the parapet to guide him to his destination.

Another half hour passed before he caught sight of them, hanging like twin stars in the darkness.

Below them, however, appeared a red light, much to the boy's surprise.

It recalled to his mind the signal he had seen against the cliffs on the night the smugglers were alleged to have landed the kegs of cognac.

There was a difference in this signal, the red light being below instead of above the white lights.

Taking in consideration the presence of the revenue officer along shore, Tom jumped to the conclusion that the signal was intended as a warning.

The fact that it was shown indicated that an attempt was to be made to land another lot of kegs in this vicinity.

Presuming that it was being flashed from the same spot the other had been shown, Tom wondered why his mother had failed to hang out the two white lights he depended on as a guide to the entrance of the cove.

Tom knew it was a dangerous matter to try to make the entrance to the cove on such a black night without lights, for there was every chance of the sloop being smashed upon the rocks, as, according to his calculation, the tide was at its flood.

The only safe course for him to follow was to keep on for the entrance of the harbor, run in there and anchor under the lee of the Point till dawn.

This he started to do.

He had tacked in toward the shore in anticipation of getting his mother's signal, and was already close enough to catch the roar of the surf on the rocks.

He tacked out again, and soon made out the stationary white light of the lighthouse on the western side of the harbor entrance.

It was further away than he expected, figuring on the position of the three signal lights.

He cast his eye at those lights again.

The red light had disappeared, leaving the two white lights only, and they looked just like his mother's signal.

Moreover, the distance that intervened between them and the light at the entrance of the harbor corresponded with the position of the cove.

Tom was a bit puzzled over the situation, but decided to take a chance and run in again.

In a few minutes he made out a third white light low down near the shore.

That was the light his mother set to show the entrance to the cove.

"Those are her lights after all," he said, with a feeling of relief. "But I don't understand why she displayed that red light below the parapet. She never did it before. It was foolish of her, for if the revenue man is on the watch, as is quite probable, it would arouse his suspicion that something was doing in the smuggling line."

Confident that everything was all right now, Tom headed directly for the lower white light.

The roar of the surf grew louder as he drew near the shore.

He could see nothing ahead or around him but the white lantern gleaming like a glowing spark through the darkness.

It required a steady hand and an intimate knowledge of the entrance to the cove to make it in safety that night, but Tom had no misgivings about it.

Inside of ten minutes the sloop shot into the narrow channel and was presently safe within the basin close to the light.

Tom dropped his kedge, lowered his sails and waded up the inclined beach to the lantern which he detached and started up the path to the shelf on which the cottage stood.

His mother was reading a paper by the light of the lamp.

The shawl she was accustomed to wear over her head when she went outside at night lay over the back of a chair.

On the floor against the wall, and concealed by its folds, stood a lantern with red glass.

"Well, mother, I've got back," said Tom, hanging up his cap.

"I see you have," she answered, in a matter-of-fact way, dropping the paper and moving toward the stove, where her son's supper was kept warm against his return.

"It's a black night, and blowing half a gale," said the boy, pulling a chair up to the table.

"It is, but you had the lights to guide you."

"They puzzled me to-night."

"How?"

"You hung out a red one in addition to the others. Why did you do that?"

"You are mistaken, son. Do you think I would mislead you on such a night as this?" she answered in a furtive way.

"I shouldn't think you would, but the red light was there all right. I have good eyes, and saw it as plainly as I see you now. It hung low between the others. I thought it was a signal of the smugglers, and I judged that I was half a mile nearer Bird Point than I really was. I didn't find out my mistake till I tacked further out and caught sight of the light-house gleam from the lighthouse. Then I was puzzled, but looking shoreward again I saw the red light was gone, and I made out the cove light at the landing. I tacked about and headed in, confident everything was all right, but the showing of the red light was a mystery to me."

"If you saw a red light in the position you have stated, it must have been the work of that revenue man," said his mother. "He may have news that another vessel with liquor aboard is expected off shore to-night, and he adopted that ruse to entice them to land the stuff before morning."

"That's so, mother. I never thought of that. Have you seen the man around?"

"No; how could I in the darkness?"

"True," said Tom, applying himself to his supper.

"You did not remove the white lights before coming in?"

"No. I will attend to that after supper."

"Never mind. I will look after them. Go to bed, you must be tired. Did you get a load to-day?"

"A big one, but I was afraid I'd lose half of it before I could make the cove. I had to run all the way under a double reef. On the whole, I think my heavy cargo proved an advantage, for its weight served to steady the sloop."

"Here's a letter that the postmaster's boy fetched over about noon."

Tom tore it open and read the contents.

"Another steeple-jack job, mother," he said. "I'm offered \$50 to paint the spire of the Ridgeway Episcopal Church."

"Fifty dollars! It isn't enough. You ought to have \$100."

"I'll ask \$75, but if they won't give it——"

"Tell them to find somebody else to do the work. That will bring them to terms, for steeple-jacks are not so plentiful that they can be picked up in a hurry."

Tom made no answer, and his mother taking the shawl from the chair, and hiding the red lantern under its folds, left the cottage.

She walked over to the parapet, and instead of removing the two white lights, she tied the red lantern to a thin line, lighted the wick and let it down along the face of the rocks till it hung at right angles with the other two.

Then she re-entered the cottage and found Tom still at the table.

CHAPTER XII.

TOM MAKES A DISQUIETING DISCOVERY.

Tom was very tired after his day's work, and he had his fish to attend to in the morning before he could take them to market, so he soon went to bed, much to his mother's satisfaction.

Fifteen minutes later she looked in on him and found him asleep.

Then she donned her shawl and went out on the shelf.

The night was still as black as ever, and a heavy sea was breaking on the rocks.

The woman stood under the lee of the cliff, where she was sheltered from the wind, and kept her eyes on the sea.

Two hours passed, and she hardly moved.

Then out in the direction of the Shoals appeared two white lights many feet apart, and a red one midway below them.

"At last!" muttered the woman, in an eager tone.

From under a small piece of sailcloth she took an iron saucer and placed it on the top of the parapet.

A small canister stood in it.

Striking a wind match, she ignited a fuse that stuck out of the top of the canister.

Almost immediately a bright red fire glowed up with a cloud of dark smoke which was flattened out to the leeward by the wind.

A similar flare shot out of the sea, revealing the sails and outline of a small schooner hove to and tossing on the surface of the waves.

The red light on the parapet soon went out, as did also the light on the schooner.

The two white and red lights aboard were also doused.

Mrs. Morris took the lantern her son had brought up from

the basin, lighted it and carried it down the path and replaced it on the pole that stood there.

Then she returned to the shelf.

She did not observe a shadow crouching near the corner of the cottage.

This shadow was Tom.

He had been awakened by the glare of the red flare which had shone through his open window, illuminating his little room.

Leaping out of bed, he looked out and saw his mother's form reflected by the light.

Astonished at seeing her there, and by the presence of the light, which he felt was a signal to somebody off shore, he watched, strange suspicion forming in his mind.

When the light went out, and he saw his mother light the lantern he had removed from the shore of the basin below and start for the path, he hurried into his clothes and came out of the cottage.

Going to the edge of the shelf he looked down and saw his mother hang the lantern to the pole.

Clearly she put it there to guide a boat into the cove.

"Good heavens!" ejaculated Tom. "My mother is in league with those liquor smugglers, and to think I never knew it until this moment. I would have knocked the man down who hinted such a thing. Last night she told me she was suspected to be the woman who was caught fifteen months ago in the act of warning the Brisson people against risking a landing of liquor the night their craft appeared off this vicinity. In the face of her actions to-night, can I doubt the truth of that suspicion? As she was caught and recognized, it is more than suspicion that the revenue officer is working on. He knows she is the woman. This is a terrible discovery for me to make. To think that my mother should take a hand in such illicit business. She is certain to be caught again, sooner or later, and the Government is not likely to let her off and shield her a second time. If she is shown up it will ruin us both in the estimation of the village people. I will probably be suspected as having acted as her accomplice. What is to be done?"

At that moment Mrs. Morris started up the path, and Tom retired to a place where he could watch unseen.

The woman pulled up the red lantern and extinguished it, but did not touch the two white lights.

While she was thus engaged it occurred to Tom that he would like to get a close view of the men who brought the liquor from the vessel in the offing.

Confident that the darkness would cover his movements, he made his way to the path, and went down to the basin.

Here he had the choice of hiding behind a rock or crawling under the half deck of the sloop.

He chose the latter.

In a short time he saw his mother come down and seat herself on a rock.

Half an hour passed away, and then above the whistling of the wind and the roll of the surf Tom heard the oars in their rowlocks.

Inside of a minute a stout whaleboat, propelled by eight men, shot into the cove and stopped near the sloop.

The men sprang ashore and the boat was hauled part way up on the sand.

Mrs. Morris came forward and was greeted familiarly by the steersman.

Tom heard her tell him about the presence of the revenue officer in that vicinity.

He seemed surprised that the Government had got wind of their movements so soon, and remarked that when Brisson was told he would doubtless stop the business until the situation cleared.

"Where is the officer to-night?" he asked. "Since you signaled us that a landing could be made in safety, we take it that you know he cannot interfere."

"I tricked him," said Mrs. Morris, rubbing her hands gleefully. "He got word that the smugglers were aware that this neighborhood was under watch, and that liquor would be put ashore on the beach a mile south of Rockland harbor at midnight to-night. He and his mates rode to Ridgeway this afternoon and took a train for Rockland. They are now laying for the liquor twenty miles from here, but will have their trouble for nothing. The road is clear for you to take the kegs over to Brickley's barn, as you did before."

"We haven't kegs this time, old woman, but cases of prime cognac, just as they came over from France. There are enough to make two trips in your son's hand-cart necessary; but since we have the night before us, and a clear way, that won't make any difference," said the man.

He turned to the men and told them to get busy.

They did so, and out of the big whaleboat landed twenty-four iron-bound boxes stenciled with the brand of the brandy and the shipper's name.

The boxes were carried in succession up the path to the shelf, and thence to the top of the cliff.

The cart was wheeled up there, half of them loaded on it, and three of the men started off with it across the country-side.

The steersman handed Mrs. Morris a couple of gold pieces, then got into the boat with the other five men, and put off out of the cove.

While his mother was talking with the leader of the expedition, Tom crawled out from his place of concealment and sneaked up the path in the darkness.

He had seen all he wanted to, and had, moreover, learned the destination of the smuggled liquor.

Brickley was a farmer whose place ran inland from the cliff road.

He had not been very prosperous as an agriculturist, as his land, which had been in the family from his grandfather's time, was poor and worked out.

Fifteen months since, when the smuggling of liquor went on unchecked for some months, he and his family had shown unwonted prosperity, but he gave out that his wife had received a legacy, and nobody had reason to dispute the fact.

His brief show of prosperity came from his connection with the smugglers.

When they were caught and convicted he was not implicated, for none of the liquor was traced to his place.

The only goods that was captured was what landed when the men were nabbed on the beach.

This being the case, he was called on again to act as receiver for the new expeditions.

The stuff landed three weeks since was carted there in the same way as the present lot was sent, and a day or two later Brickley carried it to its destination under a load of manure.

Mrs. Morris had sent him word to expect another lot that night, and he was up in expectation of its coming.

Tom did not want his mother to catch him up at that hour, for she would know he had become wise to a game she had used her best endeavors to keep him ignorant of, so he darted into the house, undressed and got into bed.

He had a serious problem on his hands.

He had no sympathy with lawbreakers, and he believed it was his duty to see the revenue officer and tell him all that had taken place.

At the same time he felt that he must protect his mother from the consequences of what he called her indiscretion.

How he was going to accomplish both was what worried him and kept him awake a long time.

He heard his mother open the door of his room and look in.

He pretended to be sound asleep, and she retired to her own room satisfied.

It was long after that before his eyes closed in sleep, tired as he was, and then he had reached no decision as to what course he could pursue which would save his mother from exposure and the consequences it would entail.

CHAPTER XIII.

TOM PROTECTS HIS MOTHER.

Tom slept until his mother aroused him next morning.

The clouds and the gale had disappeared, and sunshine was on the face of the sea and the landscape.

The waves, however, were still in evidence, and beat heavily against the foot of the cliffs.

After breakfast mother and son went down to the basin to clean the load of mackerel Tom had brought home in good shape.

This work engaged them until noon, and Tom had his dinner before he started to sail around to the village.

By dark he had sold the last of his retail stock.

He was wheeling his cart back to the cove when he overtook the revenue officer and a companion going in the same direction.

"Can I have a private talk with you, Mr. Duffy?" he asked.

The officer nodded, and they walked aside.

"You received information yesterday that some liquor was to be smuggled ashore in the neighborhood of Rockland harbor," said Tom.

"I did. How came you to learn about it?"

"I'd rather not say. I found it out accidentally, and hours too late to be able to warn you that the information was untrue and simply intended to get you and your men away from this neighborhood."

"I judged so when nothing happened at the point I was sent to. I did not think I could be so easily fooled, but the person who brought me word of the matter impressed me by his naive earnestness, and I am chagrined to think that I believed him. From your statement I take it for granted that a landing was made once more near the cove in which you live."

"It was made in the cove itself this time."

"You know that to be a fact, do you?" said the officer.

"I do. I was close by when the boat put in there. It was a whaleboat, manned by eight rowers and a steersman, and came from a vessel in the offing."

"You were close enough to see the faces of the men?"

"I was. I lay hidden under the half deck of my sloop."

"At what hour did this happen?"

"About midnight."

"Would you be able to identify the men?"

"I would know the steersman, at any rate. He was in charge of the boat."

"How many kegs did they land?"

"None at all. They brought two dozen cases of fine brandy in the same shape as they were imported."

"They were carried up to the top of the cliff and carted away?"

"Yes."

"Too bad. It would have been a fine haul for us, and we would have got the smugglers. Now it will be a difficult matter to trace them, if not impossible."

"I can furnish you with a clew."

"Can you?" cried the officer, eagerly. "I will see that you are rewarded if we nail them."

"Very well, it's a bargain if you let me name the reward, and promise solemnly to pay it."

"I don't like to bind myself to a blind agreement. I might not be able nor willing to keep it."

"Will you give me your word of honor as an officer to deal fairly by me?"

"I will. I can promise that."

"Then I will trust you. The reward I ask is immunity for my mother."

"Ah! You have discovered at last that she has dealings with the smugglers?"

"I regret to say I have. I need hardly ask you if you know she is the person who was caught on the cliffs fifteen months ago in the act of signaling the smugglers' vessel, and escaped prosecution and exposure by trapping the rascals."

"She was that person. I know it as a fact. I am afraid she won't escape this time."

"But you have no evidence against her yet."

"We have you."

"I have told you nothing."

"You have just admitted that you have found her out. The Government, on that admission, can put you on the witness stand and force you to tell all you know."

"I would tell nothing that would incriminate her."

"Then you would be sent to prison for contempt of court."

"I will go to prison sooner than say a word."

"Well, what about this clew you spoke of?"

"I heard where the two dozen cases of brandy were to be taken last night."

"You did?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"I will tell only on the assurance that you promise not to bring my mother into the matter. You ought to be able to capture the brandy and prevent the landing of any more without mentioning her as a party in the case. You must not give out either that I furnished you with the clew. You can take all the credit yourself of finding the smuggled brandy. It will be a feather in your cap."

"All right. I agree to your conditions. I take it for granted that your mother was a party to the hoax that was played upon me, and that she signaled the smugglers that the coast was clear to land the brandy."

"I have nothing to say about that. Do you know a farmer by the name of Brickley? His place is about half a mile from here over yonder."

"I know the place, but have no acquaintance with the man."

"The brandy was taken there. If you wish to capture it you will lose no time in searching his barn. I guess he hasn't removed it yet, but can't say positively, for he's had all day to do it."

"Good! Give me all the facts of the landing, as you know them, omitting your mother's connection with it. I guess I can act without bringing her in, so the less I know about how she figured in it the better."

Tom told everything about the landing without showing that his mother had been on the spot at all.

The officer was satisfied.

He called to his companion and they retraced their way while the boy continued on to the cove, where he found his supper awaiting him and his mother in high good humor over the gold she had received from the leader of the landing party and the money she expected to get from the sale of her son's big load of fish.

"Are you going after more mackerel in the morning?" she asked him.

"No. I'm going to Ridgeway to see about that steeple-jack work."

"Then see that you get what it's worth."

"Never fear, I'll ask for more than \$50 if it's worth it."

Next morning he rode to the town with the postmaster's son and called on the church trustee who had written him.

He was taken to the church, and viewed the spire.

The only thing he was expected to furnish was the rope and the bo'sun's chair necessary to the job.

He saw that \$50 was a fair price, and he agreed to bring his apparatus over that afternoon and start in the first thing in the morning.

When he got back to the village he found the place in a state of excitement.

Farmer Brickley had been arrested on the charge of aiding and abetting liquor smuggling into the State and country.

The evidence against him was the twenty-four cases of cognac discovered concealed in his barn.

The revenue officer who made the capture did not give out any of the facts that led to the arrest of Brickley.

When questioned on the subject he simply winked his eye and looked wise.

Tom carried the news to his mother, wondering how she would take it.

She looked a bit startled, but quickly recovered herself.

The capture of the brandy did not affect her, for she had no further interest in it.

What made her uneasy was the fear that her own arrest would follow.

The afternoon passed away, however, and she was not disturbed.

After dinner Tom put the rope and bo'sun's chair into his cart and wheeled it to town.

The caretaker of the church took charge of the outfit.

At eight next morning the young steeple-jack was on hand to begin his work.

This spire was smooth and not equipped with fancy cleats.

He worked his way up to the weather-vane by means of the looped rope method, and then pulled up his bo'sun's chair, which he made fast to the loop.

After that he had only to haul up the paint and get to work.

He applied a gilt color to the vane, making it sparkle in the sunshine.

Then he used a black paint on the steeple itself.

The absence of cleats enabled him to work the loop downward, letting it out as he proceeded.

When he quit at noon for his dinner he slid down to the belfry window by a long rope without knots.

On resuming work he easily shinned up the rope to his chair in sailor fashion.

Pedestrians on the street below stopped to watch him at his work, for there always is a fascination about the movements of a steeple-jack.

The work is regarded as extra hazardous, and for that reason he very properly gets big pay.

In spite of the risk they run, steeple-jacks don't often fall.

There is always "a cherub aloft" who watches over the life of a steeple-jack as well as the ordinary sailor-jack.

At any rate, our hero went on with his work without the least anxiety concerning his safety, although his life depended on the looped rope around the spire which sustained him, his chair and the pot of paint.

The bo'sun's seat was attached to the looped rope by two short ropes provided with small woven eyeloops through which the looped rope ran.

This enabled Tom to slide all around the big loop just as if the chair was worked by pulleys.

After painting within an inch or two of the looped rope all around, he released the sailor knot that held the loop and let it out far enough to enable him to go on with his work.

Of course, he had evened up the slack by pulling himself all around the steeple and pushing the rope down about two feet.

Naturally, the circle of work to be done widened the further down he went.

He had more than half the work done at sundown, when he knocked off for the day and rode home on the postmaster's wagon.

His mother had been on pins and needles all day, fearing a visit from the revenue officer, but nothing like that happened.

She did not dream that her safety had been secured by her son, but supposed her part in the landing was merely suspected, and suspicion wasn't proof.

Tom completed his work on the steeple next day, which included the belfry, and received the price agreed upon.

He loaded his rope and chair into his cart and started off for Bayport.

"Fifty dollars for two days' work isn't bad," he thought, as he walked along. "I like it better than fishing. The only trouble is to get work enough to keep busy. It's earning a living by nerve just as many people earn a lot of money by their brains. Now that the mackerel have gone so far east, I don't see any use of my following them. My boat doesn't carry a load big enough to make it pay. With luck in my favor on the ground it takes a whole day to go, come and fish—a day of eighteen hours. If the fish don't bite to any extent, the trip will take another day, maybe. Then another day is used up cleaning and selling the fish. At that rate I could do about as well confining myself to the Shoals. Anyway, by next week the mackerel will be practically out of my reach, and I'll have to fish off shore here or not at all. Now I've earned \$175 by two steeple-jack jobs, and \$225 from the mackerel so far. That makes \$400, enough to put us on our feet this summer, for our expenses are not heavy. I guess I'll quit fishing and look for more steeple-jack work. If I get only one good job a week I can earn \$500 during the summer, and that will put us on Easy street for the winter. Yes, I think that is the right thing for me to do."

He laid his plans before his mother at the supper-table.

"Where are you going to get the steeple-jack work?" she asked him.

"Look for it."

"You'll have to travel around."

"I suppose so."

"You may be away for days, and I'll be left alone."

"I guess you can stand it. Nobody is likely to visit you. Now that the revenue officer has captured the last lot of smuggled liquor, and nabbed the man who has been standing in with the smugglers, probably you won't see him around for awhile to come."

"I hope not. I don't like spies."

Tom laughed and dropped the subject.

After supper he went to the village to call on Nellie Dare.

He called at the post-office first, and was handed a letter postmarked Belfast.

It was from Aeronaut Denby, informing him that a hundred and fifty dollar steeple-jack job awaited him in that city, and that he wouldn't be required to furnish anything.

Tom made up his mind to start for Belfast first thing in the morning.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONCLUSION.

"When he got home Tom showed the letter to his mother.

"There's another steeple-jack job, and there's \$150 in it for me," he said.

The prospect of the \$150 coming her way stifled any objections Mrs. Morris might have advanced against her son going to Belfast.

At breakfast she handed him the money he needed to cover his estimated expenses, and he bade her good-by.

Reaching Belfast, he went directly to the address given him by Mr. Denby, and found the aeronaut at home studying plans for an improved aeroplane he intended to construct.

"I don't know whether you'll undertake the work I wrote you about," said Mr. Denby. "It is rather a stiff one. The big cupola on the roof of our tallest building, which is fifteen stories high, is to be painted. The manager of the company that owns it is looking for a man with nerve enough to do the work. I told him about you, and he asked me to send for you. I'll take you downtown and show you the building. If you think you can do the job in first-class shape, I'll introduce you to the manager."

They went down to the business part of the town.

The cupola was a large one, and occupied the entire front part of the building.

Several painting firms had estimated on it, the lowest figure being \$150.

This bid had been accepted, but the firm had to back out because it could not get a man to tackle the job.

The work was then offered to the other bidders in order, and all of them found themselves in the same predicament.

Every painter that went on the roof and saw the peril of the undertaking in its broadest light declined to start in at any price the bosses were willing to pay.

Two-thirds of the work had to be done at the risk of about a 175-foot fall to the street, or a 60-foot fall to the roof of the adjoining building.

The other third, the rear part, was a safe proposition, as painting jobs go.

Tom got his first view of the cupola from the street.

"Pretty risky thing to swing out on that," said Denby as they looked up.

"Yes. Is there a trap in the roof at the foot of the flag pole?"

"Yes."

"The flag pole is pretty solid, I suppose?"

"As solid as any pole in a like position."

"Then I guess I'll take the job. All I'll need is a stout rope and a bo'sun's chair. I'll take the chances of falling."

"Then I'll take you to the company's office, and if the manager is in you can arrange matters with him."

The manager was in, and Tom was introduced to him as a nervy steeple-jack.

"Before we come to an arrangement," said the manager, "I think you had better go up to the cupola and size up the difficulties of the work. It is easy enough for you to look up to the cupola, but the sensation is quite different to look down. It has got the goat of a number of men accustomed to taking chances on high scaffolding. In this case you'll have to do the work swinging on a seat attached to a single rope, and it requires a steady hand to lower yourself from time to time as the work progresses."

Tom went up with Denby and viewed the curve of the cupola from the trap-door.

He was satisfied with the proper apparatus he wouldn't fall, so he returned to the manager and closed the deal with him.

The manager was to furnish everything, and Tom was to start in next morning.

Denby told the boy he could stop at his house free of cost while he was on the job, and Tom accepted the invitation.

Everything was ready for the boy when he appeared at the building on the following morning.

A stout block was attached to the foot of the flag pole.

It had two pulleys.

Through one Tom put the rope attached to the bo'sun's chair.

Through the other he put a rope not quite so thick, which was attached to a broad band around his waist.

The slack of the first rope was tied with a sailor's knot to the half-loop of the chair, while the slack of the second was attached to the boy under his arms.

When he was ready to lower himself he let out the requisite length of the body line first and made the slack fast again.

Then he let down the chair with himself in it.

If by any mischance he lost his grip on the main rope, his weight would be caught and sustained by the body line, and he would be able to regain control of the other rope.

We will not follow him on his work.

The job took him four days, and he finished it to the satisfaction of the manager.

With the \$150 in his pocket he bade Mr. Denby and his wife good-by and set out for home.

In his pocket he carried a copy of a Belfast daily with a photograph of himself as he was swinging against the front of the cupola half way down, taken by a staff of photographers from the roof of a building opposite.

To this was attached the newspaper story of his feat.

When he reached the village he showed the paper to several people he knew, and then hurried over to the cove.

As he passed down the path leading from the top of the cliff to the shelf on which the cottage stood, a strange feeling that all was not well seized upon him.

Standing at the door he saw Duffy, the revenue officer, and one of his men.

His mother was not visible.

Tom hurried forward, with a suspicion that the officer had gone back on his promise and put his mother under arrest.

Duffy saw him and came forward to meet him.

"Why are you here, Mr. Duffy?" Tom asked, aggressively.

"We are here by accident. Where have you been?"

"I have been in Belfast for five days attending to a steeple-jack job."

"For five days! Then you don't know——"

He stopped and looked at the boy.

"Don't know what?"

"What has happened here?"

"What has happened here?" cried Tom. "Is my mother sick?"

"Worse than that, young man," said the officer, solemnly.

"You don't mean to say she is——"

"Dead? Yes. She has been murdered."

"Murdered! Great heavens!" cried Tom, breaking down.

"Murdered by the French smuggler, Brisson, in revenge for the signal she gave sixteen months or so ago which trapped his men and lost him his cargo of brandy."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Here is her dying statement, written in her blood after the scoundrel left her for dead."

The officer pulled out a large sheet of wrapping paper folded up.

Unfolding it, the boy read the evidence against the smuggler with his own eyes.

"The villain! He must be caught!" cried Tom.

"I hope so, but he's a slippery customer. Your mother has been dead at least two days. We came here for a drink of water, and made the gruesome discovery."

"My poor mother!" cried Tom, in a tone of grief. "Let me go to her."

"One moment. I have something to tell you first."

"What is it?"

"The night I held my interview with you here I made the remark that I had learned something about you that was not generally known."

"Yes, yes, I remember. You refused to tell me what it was."

"I said it was your mother's place to tell you."

"Now that she is dead, she cannot."

"So it remains for me to tell you. You are not her son."

"I am not her son?"

"No. Who your real parents are I can't tell you. Probably you will never learn. Sixteen years ago last March a terrible storm took place off this coast, and a steamer was wrecked on the Shoals. Only one person escaped alive from the wreck, a child two years of age. That child floated ashore in a small boat which drifted into the cove below. The boat and its small passenger were found by Bill Morris, the man you have looked upon as your father, on the morning after the storm. I need hardly say that the child was yourself, and that you survived. You were adopted by Morris and his wife, and have grown up supposing them to be your parents. The presumption is that your parents were on the ill-fated steamer and were lost."

"How did you learn all this?" cried the amazed boy.

"From John Bunsen, an old fisherman in the village. He promised Bill Morris and his wife to keep their secret as long as they lived. I got it from him by accident, and felt bound to keep it, too. Now that Mrs. Morris is dead, you can go to Bunsen and he will confirm all I have told you."

"It seems incredible," said the bewildered boy.

Duffy took Tom into the cottage where his foster mother lay dead with a wound in her breast.

We will pass over the interval that elapsed until Mrs. Morris was laid beside her husband in the country graveyard.

Old John Bunsen swore to the truth of the story of the boy's rescue from the sea and his adoption by the Morrises.

Then Tom, feeling that he was rightfully entitled to his foster mother's little hoard of money, looked for it.

He found a big earthen crock under the floor of the bedroom occupied by Mrs. Morris.

Instead of a few hundred dollars, the boy was astonished to find over \$10,000, the savings of Morris and his wife.

Tom took possession of the money and placed it to his credit in the bank.

He remained in undisputed possession of the cottage, locking the place up when he went fishing or undertook a job of steeple-jack work.

A year later, though not quite twenty, he and Nellie Dare, the beauty of Bayport, were married.

By this time Tom had acquired quite a reputation as a steeple-jack, and work flowed in on him.

Although his young wife objected to his hazardous calling, Tom continued for many years to make a living by nerve, and was known far and wide as Tom the Steeple-jack.

Next week's issue will contain "SAVING A MILLION; OR, BEN AND THE WALL STREET BROKERS."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

A harmless bullet, made of a shell of chalk, has been invented by a Parisian physician, and it will no doubt be exclusively used by French duelists. When it strikes a person it merely marks the spot without doing the least injury. With a mask over the face, men can practice revolver shooting at each other just as they now practice fencing.

After torturing them, insurgent Moors slashed to pieces Capt. Herve and a lieutenant, a fellow scout in Herve's aeroplane. While reconnoitering near Zenmour, Morocco, the plane's motor failed. Herve skillfully and safely made a gliding descent. While the Frenchmen were repairing the motor, a band of Moors surprised them. In their fury the natives destroyed the aeroplane.

The British oil tank steamer *Ashtabula*, which arrived from Lobitos, a town near Callao, Peru, the other day completed one of the longest, if not the longest, non-stop steam voyages on record. On account of bad weather, which forced her to round Cape Horn, instead of threading the Straits of Magellan, the vessel had 10,881 miles to her credit when she paused to take a pilot off Sandy Hook. The *Ashtabula* is an oil burner.

In anticipation of increased water trade through the Panama Canal, 881 sailing, steam and unrigged vessels of 215,056 gross tons were built in the United States last year. Four hundred and seventy-nine vessels were constructed on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, 229 on the Pacific, 84 on the Great Lakes, 83 on Western rivers and 3 each in Porto Rico and Hawaii. The figures are from a Government report issued recently.

Mrs. Clark E. Sanborn, of Buffalo, aged about 55 years, committed suicide in the rapids a short distance above the falls the other day. The woman was seen acting queerly by Constable Martin on Third Sister Island of the State Reservation, and was taken in custody. She broke away from him, however, and threw herself into the rapids, where she was carried into an eddy. She was pulled out with a pike pole, but was found to be dead.

A ski party from Lemberg, near Vienna, was held up by wolves in the Carpathian Mountains throughout a night recently. Their route lay through a forest, and darkness overtook them before they reached their destination. The wolves followed them at a distance during the afternoon, and becoming more bold in the darkness endeavored to rush the last man in the party. The skiing party decided that it would not be safe to go any farther, and halted beneath a high rock. Then they made a fence by sticking their skis in the snow. The party had revolvers and electric lanterns and were able to defend themselves against the attacks of the wolves, killing several of them. When daylight came they escaped.

The great strength of reinforced concrete telegraph poles was proved to a demonstration during the violent storms of this winter. The Pennsylvania Railroad Company states that this was shown in the case of their telegraph lines, where a large number of reinforced concrete poles were exposed to the recent heavy storm, which practically isolated New York City. Though many of the wooden poles were broken down by the wind, in no case did a reinforced concrete pole fall, and this in spite of the fact that so severe was the stress that the wooden cross arms upon some of these poles were broken. They are made of Portland cement, reinforced with steel rods. They have the further advantages, in addition to their strength, that they do not rot at the ground and that they never rust as do the steel poles.

Richard H. Terhune, a prominent manufacturer and a member of one of New Jersey's oldest families, died of blood poisoning and hemorrhages at his home, No. 30 Maple street, Kearny, N. J., as the result of the extraction of two teeth ten days ago. Mr. Terhune suffered from a severe toothache. He went to a dentist who pulled a tooth. After he returned home he was still in pain, and finding that two other teeth were loose tugged away with his fingers until he had dislodged them. He began to suffer great pain three days later, and a physician found that blood poisoning had set in. There was no hope for his recovery. Mr. Terhune was descended from the Sanfords, early settlers. Capt. Oscar Sanford purchased that part of the State, now known as Hudson and Bergen counties, from the Indians for a small sum of money. Mr. Terhune was sixty-five years old and was connected with the Arlington Company, of Arlington, N. J. He is survived by a widow and five children.

The new recruiting law of the Austro-Hungarian forces stipulates a height of at least five feet for men to be enlisted in the ordinary rank and file of the territorial forces or of the navy, while for those men who will work in the workshops or arsenals or in the offices as clerks, the minimum height will be one inch less than five feet. The new requirements pay increased attention to the antecedents of the men, especially the mental history, and a history of previous epileptic attacks or mental instability will make the man ineligible for the service. In the last year, when, owing to the uncertainty of the political situation, preparations for war included the recruiting of large numbers of men from apparently underfed districts, it was noted that persons otherwise quite healthy did not reach the height limit. These would be lost if the old law should continue in force. At any rate, says the Vienna correspondent of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, even with the new law, the supply of men capable for service is but sparingly drawn on, not even one per cent. of the population of 50,000,000 being under arms in time of peace, while for war about four per cent. are available.

CHEEK AND CHANCE

—OR—

TRAVELING ON HIS WITS

By ED. KING

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XXIII (Continued).

"He is a fraud," rejoined Jason. "He has not the slightest proof that Leslie Markham is dead. Don't you be afraid. We'll bring that gold out and put it in trust. I know a way to beat him."

"If you are not sure of that the gold is better where it is for years yet."

"I'll take the responsibility. What's more, I'll tell you a surprising fact. Leslie Markham is alive, and I know where he is!"

Andy gave a spasmodic cry of joy.

"Jason!" he exclaimed. "You don't mean it? You are not joking?"

"It is too serious a matter. Yes, I know where Leslie Markham is. All these years that the old doctor has been hankering for the recovery of his son, Leslie has been almost within his call. He has even been beside his father's wagon a number of times and heard him talk."

"Can this be true?" gasped Andy.

"It is true!"

"But what an ungrateful and unkind son. Why did he not gladden his father's heart by making himself known?"

"Ah, for a very good reason. Leslie Markham was brought up by those who stole him away in infancy, in a life of crime and shame. He was branded with the mark of Cain, and hunted for his life. He feared his father's curse."

"I do not think he need have feared that," said Andy, with a chill of horror. "I am sure Dr. Markham would have forgiven anything. The stolen child was not to blame for the shaping of its career."

"Possibly! But that is why Leslie Markham kept away from his father, even to the breaking of his heart. Now, however, he has reformed and escaped the law penalty. We will secure this gold, place it in trust for him, and let him defend his own against this impostor Smith. We will then be clear of all."

"And I shall have faithfully executed my oath to Dr. Markham," said Andy.

"Just so."

"Oh, Jason, this is a great relief to me. You are a wonderful fellow. How did you chance to find Leslie Markham so quickly?"

"Oh, I have known him from infancy. I knew the people who reared him to a life of infamy, in revenge upon Dr. Markham."

"They should be punished."

"Their crimes have been expiated long ago. Death has wiped out the score for eternity. Leslie Markham looks to the future."

"It is a sad and terrible story," said Andy. "I am an orphan myself, but I was brought up kindly and chastely, though my kind guardian was a gambler. My origin will never be known."

Jason gripped Andy's hand with a strange emotion.

"Andy, my lad," he said, "chance was kind in throwing us together. Our sympathies are akin, and may we never be separated in friendship and companionship again."

"Amen!" said Andy. "But come, Jason, we are losing time."

Consulting the time-table, they found that they could get a train for Bangor within the hour. It is needless to say that they got it.

But as they boarded a forward car two men with muffled faces boarded a rear car. Andy saw them, and communicated this fact to Jason, who smiled.

"Let them try it," he said, resolutely. "We are armed, and if they follow us far they will get pretty weary, I can tell you."

There was no doubt but that the two muffled men were Smith and Oxley. It did not disturb Jason in the least, however.

In due time they reached Bangor. The trees were budding and the birds singing gayly as they drove out into the country on the way to Molunkus.

Once, looking back down the country highway, Andy saw two horsemen, and called Jason's attention to the fact. The latter only smiled grimly.

When they arrived at South Molunkus they found large parties of men coming out of the woods.

None were going in. The season was, of course, closed for game, and the law was hardly off yet on salmon and trout.

So it took some effort on Jason's part to explain to the game and fish wardens.

"We are simply going into the woods for recreation and health," said Jason. "We intend to violate no laws. We may devote a month or more to building our camp."

This looked reasonable, and the wardens did not demur further. Thus this difficulty was removed.

The men who were coming out of the woods were red-shirted lumbermen and river drivers who had been in the camp all winter logging.

So Andy and Jason bade farewell to civilization, and with only a compass for guide plunged into the deep woods. Soon they were in the very heart of the wilderness.

If they were trailed they knew nothing of it.

At night they made a fire shake down and drew their blankets about them. With a fire at their feet they slept soundly. No human being disturbed them.

A week was consumed in reaching Moose creek. Here a permanent camp was made of limbs and boughs of the fir tree.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ALL ENDS WELL.

Of course the fortune seekers had to consider the easiest and most logical way of conveying the gold out of the wilderness after they should recover it.

By making a series of carries of a few miles here and there from the head-waters of one stream to the waters of others, it was figured out by Jason that the gold could be all transported out of the wilderness in bark canoes.

Down the Penobscot it would be easy to float to Oldtown by carrying around rapids here and there. A system of waterways extended to the Penobscot.

Accordingly they went to work with this plan in view. The canoes which Andy had brought into the region a year before were yet there and in good condition.

But it took several days to get pitch and repair their seams, to make other preparations, and it was almost a week before they were ready to search for the gold.

In their kit they had brought pick and spade, and there would be no trouble in digging.

"Now," said Jason, when all was completed. "We are ready, my lad. Show me the chart."

Andy drew the piece of oiled paper from his bosom. The directions were traced again:

"Fourteen paces west by compass from three-forked pine which marks clearing, chest of gold nine feet beneath surface."

"That is easy," said Jason.

In a few moments they were skirting the forest toward the clearing. Suddenly Andy gave a sharp cry:

"Ah!" he ejaculated, "what is this?"

"What?" asked Jason.

"Look!"

In a soft bed of soil where a little stream made a tiny course, there was plainly to be seen a human footprint. The boot heel showed heavy nails.

"Somebody has been this way," whispered Andy. "We are watched!"

Jason's face darkened. He examined the trail closely.

"That is not my footprint nor yours," he declared. "It may be some passing lumberman."

"The nails are not long enough. They always wear spike-like nails."

"You are right," said Jason.

For a moment they hesitated. Then Jason drew his revolver.

"Are you armed, Andy?"

"Yes."

"Very well. We have nothing to fear. If it is those two dogs, Smith and Oxley, we can stand them off."

So they kept on. In due time they reached the very mound which Andy had located once before.

Jason sank the pick in the needle-covered soil and loosened the surface. Then he began work with the spade.

He was strong and made the dirt fly. Andy kept watch the while with his revolver in readiness.

Suddenly Jason's spade struck something solid.

"It's here!" he cried.

A moment later the splintering of wood followed. Then he lifted a small canvas bag and placed it outside the trench. One after another of these bags he brought to the surface.

At length the last one was recovered, and he sprang out of the excavation. There was a large and exceedingly heavy heap of the bags of gold.

Andy's eyes were like saucers. He saw that some of them were marked one thousand dollars, some five thousand dollars, and various sums.

"Now," said Jason, "the question is how are we to get them to the canoe."

This seemed a problem. While they were considering it a heavy footstep crunched in the undergrowth and two men emerged to view. One was Oxley and the other was Darius Smith.

The first looked amazement and covetousness, the second wore an ugly sneer upon his face. Jason and Andy displayed their revolvers. Smith was the first to speak.

"I thought we would succeed in cornering you," he sneered. "Your little game is about ended. So this is where you have had Dr. Markham's gold hidden, eh? The old doctor left no gold, eh? A fine pair of rascals you are."

Jason took a step forward.

"You are an uninvited and unwelcomed guest here," he said. "This is strictly our affair. You meddle with it on peril of your life."

"Do you take us for brigands like yourselves?" jeered Smith. "Unearth your illgotten gains. Take them to the nearest bank. The legal heir will then put in his claim. Good-day."

With mock ceremony the two rascals turned and disappeared in the forest. Andy was puzzled by their conduct, but Jason only smiled and said:

"We have not seen the last of them."

After events proved this. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the difficulties overcome by Andy and Jason in transporting the two hundred and twenty thousand dollars in American gold eagles to Bangor and safely into bank vaults.

There seventy-five thousand dollars was placed to Andy's account. The balance was held subject to the order of Leslie Markham.

"Now," cried Andy, "it is for you, Jason, to bring Leslie Markham forward to claim his own."

"He will be at the bank to-morrow at ten o'clock," said Jason.

Andy could not sleep that night. He wondered much what Leslie Markham would look like, and if he would be grateful for the preservation of his inheritance.

(To be continued)

FACTS WORTH READING

CAUGHT AFTER EIGHT YEARS.

For almost eight years John Sullivan, parole violator from the Joliet State Prison, Ill., has wandered from city to city as a vagrant, serving short terms in many jails.

He was arrested in Oregon and identified by his photograph by Detective Pat Moloney. Illinois authorities have been hunting him since May 22, 1906.

Moloney and Detective Swennes came upon Sullivan at Third and Stark streets, Portland, Oreg., and took him into custody as a vagrant. At headquarters Moloney identified him.

"I'd just as soon go back," said Sullivan. "I've been in every jail in the United States, I guess, and I might as well take up my permanent abode at Joliet, where I know most of the boys."

Sullivan was sent to prison for a definite term from Chicago on Feb. 26, 1903, for burglary, and in 1906 he was paroled. On his first opportunity he disappeared. The Joliet authorities were notified immediately and an agent was sent for him.

AMUNDSEN NEEDS \$200,000.

Private reports from Christiania, received at Washington, are to the effect that Capt. Roald Amundsen, the Norwegian explorer, must have \$200,000 before he can equip his proposed polar expedition. Explorers and scientists here express the belief that it will be practically impossible to raise the required sum.

The reports from Christiania said that Capt. Amundsen's ship, the *Fram*, after completing repairs at Montevideo, would sail for Norway, the plan being for her to leave there and pass through the Panama Canal to the Pacific coast early in 1915, provided that \$200,000 could be raised before that time.

The National Geographic Society recently decided to appropriate \$20,000 for the Amundsen expedition. According to the announced plans, the expedition is scheduled to leave the Pacific coast next year to explore the vast polar tract between Northern Canada, Alaska and Asia, including the North Pole. It is expected that the voyage would require at least four years in the polar ice.

SMOKE CLOUDS TO PREVENT FROST.

The first thought would be, when mention is made of making artificial clouds, that the purpose for such things would be to secure shade, but that is not the idea at all—artificial clouds are made as a preventive against frost.

This idea has really been taken up and successful experiments made in the cold mountainous regions of Europe, where people depend entirely upon certain crops and where sudden frosts are very likely to occur.

The clouds are not made of vaporized water, of course, but of smoke. However, it is such dense smoke and hangs so thickly over the territory where it is produced that it has every appearance of clouds.

The smoke clouds are produced by tar, resin or petroleum, according to the abundance of the particular product in the locality where it happens to be needed.

The success of the system is said to depend entirely on the promptitude of its application, in which case results are immediate. Vats of tar, or whatever the substance to be used may be, must be at hand at the various points necessary, and immediately upon a significant fall in temperature the laborers must be instructed to produce the cloud by the application of slowly kindling fire to the substance at hand.

A system has been perfected for use over large areas by which one man can fire a line of vats. The explosion is produced by means of a wire.

VALUE OF TEMPERANCE IN BASEBALL.

The value of temperance cannot be better shown than by a study of the careers of baseball players in the major leagues. An examination of the records for the past ten years reveals that the athletes who abstained from the use of intoxicants are the men who lasted longest in the game, were the most famous and were the most successful from a financial viewpoint. In order to make a comparison, a baseball expert has examined the records of thirty players who were total abstainers and of thirty others whom he knew to be drinkers—not necessarily drunkards, but men who were "moderate" drinkers. He began with the year 1904, when the sixty players selected were all in the major leagues. Four years later, in 1908, only nine of the drinking, while twenty-one of the abstainers were still playing. In 1909 only four of the drinkers remained, compared to sixteen of the abstainers. This year, ten years later, only two of the drinkers, of whom one has quit drinking, remain, while eight of the non-drinkers are major leaguers. Other statistics bring out the point even better. Of the thirty drinkers eight are "down and out," five are living, but have all they can do to get along, three are prosperous, and two of them are playing yet, nine are dead and five are unaccounted for. Of the thirty non-drinkers only one is "down and out," nine have to work hard for their living, sixteen are prosperous, two are dead and only two are unaccounted for. The cause of the deaths of all the players who are not living could not be ascertained, but it was learned that of the two non-drinkers who died one succumbed to appendicitis and the other to pneumonia. Of the drinkers, four died from kidney diseases, one from consumption, one from suicide, one in an accident and two died mysteriously. In a similar manner it may be shown that the temperate players in virtually every case were the famous athletes and also the men who were popular among the fans—the real baseball enthusiasts, not the "sports" who think a player must be a "good fellow." The time of the "good fellow" in athletics is past. Christie Mathewson, Napoleon Lajoie, Eddie Plank and Hans Wagner are sufficient evidence to prove it, even without the use of the accompanying figures.

TEN-DAY ISLAND

OR,

THE SECRET OF OLD 33

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XIII (Continued).

Joe was so scared that he almost dropped off his perch.

As John Jacks looked up he saw that they had discovered the giant at last.

There he was, perched in the tree above them, a negro over six feet high, with enormous feet, and the longest arms ever seen on a man.

He was bareheaded and dressed in rags, but he had on a pair of great flat-soled shoes which had made the big footprints in the sand.

"Hello, who are you?" cried John Jacks.

"Waal, I'm Cæsar," replied the giant. "Don' yo' go for to do a thing to me, boys, an' I won't do a thing to youse."

Evidently Cæsar was as big a coward as he was a man.

"How can we hurt you?" said John Jacks. "We are in the same boat you are. Tell us all about it, Cæsar, who you are and how you came here. You needn't be afraid of us."

Climbing up into the higher branches of the tree then, the boys had their minds diverted from the danger of their situation by listening to Cæsar's story.

It was simple enough. The negro belonged in New Orleans, and had shipped as a cook on board a schooner bound for New York, which had been wrecked off Hatteras in the storm of the night before.

All hands were lost, according to Cæsar, for the schooner broke up and went down all in a moment.

In company with the mate and two sailors, Cæsar managed to get into one of the boats, which was swamped in the surf, drowning the mate and the sailors.

Somehow Cæsar managed to get ashore. Later he picked up a bag of bread, a keg of water, a lantern, and some other things, which had been in the boat.

He had not seen the boys and Susie land on the island, being asleep in the treetop at the time, and when at last he did discover the boys, he felt afraid of them, for some one had told him that they still made slaves of colored folks in North Carolina; all of which went to show that Cæsar was rather simple-minded, as he undoubtedly was.

For the next two hours John Jacks and Joe had to make the best of Cæsar's company in the tree.

The big darky grew quite reconciled to their company, when John Jacks told him who they were.

"Some schooner come along and take us all off," he kept saying. "I don' never wanter go ashore over dar. I wanter go Norf, dar's whar I wanter go."

The morning wore on, and the tide began to fall at last, and the wind seemed to go down with it.

A great change had come over Ten Day Island.

The biggest part of it had disappeared entirely.

Over near the cove the boys could see the sand heaped up in great piles, as it had not been before.

"This ends our chance of getting the chests forever, Joe," remarked John Jacks. "I have no doubt they are buried under that sand."

"What's that beyond the sand?" exclaimed Joe. "Looks like a stick bobbing up and down."

"Why, I'll be blest if it isn't a mast!" cried John Jacks, who had not seen it before. "It must be some sailboat washed ashore. Come, let's get over there and have a look; the water is pretty well down now."

Cæsar, the simple, followed them full of excitement.

The high sand piles hid the craft from view, but when they got out upon a point of land newly formed by the sea, and were able to look out beyond the sand piles, there lay a neat little fishing boat over on its side, half in the water and half buried in the sand.

CHAPTER XIV.

DISCOVERIES.

The first discovery was Cæsar, and now there was another following close upon the darky's big heels.

The discovery of Cæsar worried John Jacks not a little at the start, for he kept thinking what was to be done about the big fellow in case they were fortunate enough to find that the chest had not shifted its position, but after he came to be a little better acquainted, he arrived at the conclusion that he did not mind the giant any more than he would a big dog.

"Dat am what we want! Dat am what we want! Now we can go Norf!" bawled Cæsar, as soon as they caught sight of the sloop-rigged fishing boat.

How to get out to the sloop was the question, however.

John Jacks saw that it could not be done without a little swimming.

The sloop lay outside of the sand hills, and the sand hills blocked up the mouth of the cove.

On either side of the miniature mountain of sand an

inlet had formed, and through both these openings the tide was running swiftly.

John Jacks did not take in exactly what it meant at first, but when he did he saw that he had made a new discovery.

The storm, instead of being their enemy, was undoubtedly their friend.

The waves could no longer wash into the cove, and the consequence was, now that the tide was on the ebb, the cove was rapidly being drained.

"Hooray!" shouted John Jacks. "Why, look, Joe! In a few moments we are going to have dry land there in the cove!"

Cæsar had run out to the end of the point. He cared nothing about the state of affairs in the cove, his interest all lay in the sloop.

While the boys were talking, he slipped off his clothes, plunged into the water, and struck right out for the little craft, swimming with a strong, powerful stroke, which was a pleasure to see.

"Say! he'll go off with the sloop!" cried Joe. "What are we going to do?"

"We can't do anything about it if he does," replied John Jacks. "There doesn't seem to be any one on board, and, of course, it would be a fine thing for us to load it down with the treasure and light out of here altogether, but we can do nothing about it. I trust Cæsar, though. He seems to be a harmless fellow enough, and I believe he will bring the boat ashore."

The boys now hurried down to the cove to see what had become of the chests.

Before they had quite reached it, Joe sung out that they were up against another discovery.

"Look at them! Look at them!" he cried. "They are lying all around! They have been washed up out of the sand by the storm!"

It was really wonderful.

If John Jacks and Joe had picked their time to visit Ten Day Island to hunt for buried treasure, they could not have chosen it better.

What they would have found it next to impossible to do for themselves even with a diving suit, the storm had done for them.

Where water had been was now dry land, and there lay six great wooden chests like the one they had discovered in the first place, and this one, by the way, had not been moved, but still lay on its side just as they had left it, high up on the beach.

Joe was so overcome with excitement at this remarkable discovery that he could scarcely speak.

"Johnny, that will make your rich!" he gasped. "Gee! you won't know a fellow when you get all that money in your pocket! I won't be in it with you then!"

John Jacks was trembling with excitement.

Was a fortune to be suddenly thrown into his hands?

"If I ever do get the upper hand of him," he muttered,

"I'll show him no mercy, for he never showed any to me."

Who was the boy talking about?

That is something which will be made plain later on.

The first thing was to get the chests up out of the cove before the tide set in again.

John Jacks went right about it, but at the start he ran against a snag.

The chests proved to be immensely heavy.

The one they had tackled first was the lightest of all, but none of these could they budge one inch, although they tried the rope upon each one in turn.

"This is where Cæsar is going to come in!" said John Jacks, giving it up at last. "We need his help here, Joe."

"That's what we do. Can't manage them boxes no way without him. Let's open one, Johnny. I'm just crazy to see what there is inside."

"There should be eight of the chests altogether, according to the paper," mused John Jacks. "I suppose one has gone to pieces, and that's where the gold came from which I found on the sand. No, we won't open them yet, Joe. I'm afraid we are going to have trouble with Cæsar when he comes to see the gold."

"Here he comes. By gracious, he has got the sloop!" cried Joe.

The little craft was just coming into view around the point. Cæsar had run a sail up and was handling the tiller like an expert.

He waved his hand to the boys, and they hurried out on the point to meet him.

"Hooray! Hain't nobody abo'd, but dey's lots of grub. Must have broke loose and drifted away from somewhar. It will ca'y all ob us, all right. Hain't no call for us to stay on dis yere God-forsaken island no longer now."

"Work into that little cove down there, and we will come and have a look at your boat, Cæsar!" John Jacks called out. "We have found something to show you, too—something that will make you open your eyes."

"What am it, boss?" roared the darky, opening his eyes right then.

"Wait till you see," replied John Jacks, and they hurried on to meet Cæsar and his prize.

The sloop proved to be a new one, and a most excellent craft in its way.

The name painted on its stern was the "Pigeon," and the place was Doyletown, a settlement some miles below Wareton.

There was a large cabin aft, and plenty of storage room forward for the chests.

If the Pigeon had been built on purpose to fly away with the treasure, it could not have suited the situation better.

"It's just what we want!" exclaimed John Jacks. "Now, Cæsar, we will leave it here a while. Take that ax, get on your clothes, and come along with me."

"But whar will we go, boss?" asked the giant. "Anyting to hinder working up the coast to Virginny? I've heard tell dat niggahs do powerful well in Virginny."

"We'll go where you will be all right, anyhow," replied John Jacks. "You stick to me, Cæsar, and do just as I tell you, and I'll make you rich."

"Rich!" cried the giant. "What I want to be rich fo'? Gib ole Cæsar plenty ob grub an' a good place to sleep, an' dat all he wants; but I'll stick to yo', anyhow, 'cose why, I like yo'. Come on."

(To be continued)

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Contracts for two colliers to supply the Panama Canal coal depots and to be held in reserve for the navy if needed have been awarded to the Maryland Steel Company, of Sparrows Point, Md. Each collier will have a capacity of 12,000 tons and will cost \$987,500.

The authorities have succeeded in arresting a wild man who has terrorized the settlers in Western Ontario, Canada, for many weeks. He was caught as he was slipping into a shack in which he lived. Officers were compelled to fight over twenty-six miles of road in an effort to get him in the jail and then to repeat the performance when he escaped and returned to his hut.

Nicholas Detoul, the oldest merchant in Montgomery and a soldier in the French army more than sixty years ago, shot and killed himself in Danville, Mo., where he had recently moved. He was eighty-four years old. About two years ago Detoul had a carpenter here make for him a walnut coffin, which he kept under his counter. He took pleasure in showing the coffin to customers. Detoul tried to kill himself a number of times, saying he was too old. A widow survives.

A large section of a mountain has become detached by seismic disturbances and is slowly sliding down the valley, sweeping over everything in its path. Already a number

of farms and cottages have been blotted out and the high-roads from Brive and Lanteuil, France, have been destroyed for more than half a mile. Heavy rumblings indicate that the mass is gaining impetus and the inhabitants are fleeing from their homes.

A gigantic sunfish which was caught off the California coast by D. H. Barton has been added to the American Museum of Natural History, at New York. In addition to being a monster of its species, it was so old that on its back there were wrinkles, composed of folds of skin which had grown together, leaving the surface of the skin quite smooth. The fish was 10 feet long and 11 feet high, but was not weighed. However, it is estimated that it weighed a ton.

Ben Nevis, the highest mountain in Scotland, was for many years the site of one of the most famous meteorological observatories in the world, and the discontinuance of this institution, as a result of the withdrawal of government support, was regarded by meteorologists as a serious calamity. Now it is reported that the site of the observatory is to be occupied by a tourist hotel, connected with the base of the mountain by a railroad. As, even without the railway, Ben Nevis is climbed by some 15,000 people every year, it is safe to say that the commercial undertaking will be more prosperous than was the scientific one.

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BRIEF BUT POINTED ITEMS

Dr. Henry S. Tanner, of Los Angeles, Cal., who years ago gained fame by fasting for forty days, declares that the simple life is the only one for him. Dr. Tanner, who is eighty-five years old, is now living on ten cents a day to prove that not only is it possible to do so with comfort, but that a person's health is benefited by a fruit-and-nut diet.

According to a ruling of the senior class of the Oregon Normal School, the material for the girls' graduating dresses must not exceed \$5, and the men's apparel must be proportionately reduced in cost. Girls who make their own dresses thus will prevent the dressmaker's bill and further reduce expenses. A class of seventy, the largest in years, will graduate in June, and it is estimated that the action just taken will afford all the members a saving of approximately \$500.

A system of wireless telegraph is ingeniously worked by the porters of hotels in various European cities. The position, or angle, marked by the way in which a label is pasted on a guest's baggage indicates whether the owner is accustomed to tipping. For instance, if the upper left-hand corner of the label points downward, he is generous; if the label is straightly placed, the side parallel with the sides of the trunk, he is a mean fellow, averse to tipping, and on him special attention would be wasted. He's a lobster!

Hunters who frequent the John Schray woods, five miles northwest of Lansing, Mich., have often noticed a railroad tie growing into an elm tree, and have marveled at the freak and wondered how it became in the tree. Recently it developed that it was placed in the crotch thirty-five years ago by Henry Neller, who, when a youth in a test of strength with other young farmers, chucked the tie in a crotch of the elm, which was then a sapling. The elm is now twenty inches through and so tightly has its bark grown over the tie, that it could not be removed.

The famous schooner Hiram, the second oldest vessel in the United States, will not be exhibited as such in the Panama-Pacific Exposition. The schooner has been sold in Boston and will end her days as a floating sloop for selling gasoline to power boats in Boston harbor. When

the schooner left Portland Me., in command of Mrs. George Orr, the only woman captain regularly engaged in coastwise traffic, it was planned to make the trip to San Francisco through the Panama Canal and place the ninety-five-year-old craft on exhibition in the Panama-Pacific Exposition, but the idea has fallen through and the gallant old schooner which has seen more service than any other schooner sailing the seas will end her days as a gasoline supplying boat. Her sails will be stripped off and she will be but a skeleton of the handsome schooner of yore. She was tied up at Widgery wharf, in Portland, for many years and attracted considerable attention. Capt. Mrs. Orr and her family always lived on board of the Hiram, and they generally kept a large flock of hens on board. For many years the schooner, which was built in Biddeford, has been engaged in carrying lumber from Maine ports to Boston. Her crew consisted of Mrs. Orr, her husband, their daughter and one sailor. It is said the schooner sold for \$350.

JOKES AND JESTS.

Cholly—Give me a kiss, sweetheart. Marie—I'm afraid to; the parrot is looking. The Parrot—Oh, go ahead and kiss her; I'll turn my head.

"Those folks in the next flat are awfully pretentious." "Are they?" "Yes. She pretends she sends her visiting card over—two middle names on it—when she wants to borrow butter."

District Visitor (to old woman)—Why, Mrs. Malage, haven't you seen a doctor? Mrs. Malage—Why, ma'am, my husband don't hold with no doctors. He do say I'd better die a natural death."

Teacher—What is it that you have drawn on your slate, Willie? Small Willie—It's a picture of a house. Teacher—What is a house used for? Small Willie—For a married man to keep his wife in.

Strawber—Clubberly rather gave himself away when he went to church with Miss Summit the other day. Singerly—What did he do? Strawber—He wanted the usher to check his hat and coat.

Auntie—Don't you know, Bobbie, that it's very bad manners to put your knife in your mouth? Bobbie—Don't you think, Auntie, that it's very bad manners to stare at your guests when they're eating?

"They say," began Miss Twitters, "that there is a fool in every family. Do you believe it, Mr. Saunders?" "Well, er—I hardly know," stammered Saunders. "You see, I am the only member of our family."

"Darling, will you marry me?" "This is so sudden! Why, you old confirmed bachelor, when did you ever get the idea that you ought to get married?" "I decided it yesterday." "But what decided you?" "I won a side-saddle in a raffle."

THE GIRL SPY.

By John Sherman

One drowsy day in the early autumn, when everything, from the sleepy sighing of the scarcely perceptible breeze to the doleful and monotonous chirping of the crickets, seemed to woo the senses to slumber with a solicitation not to be easily resisted, particularly if one were inactive, Gerty Merrill fell asleep in an easy chair, behind the curtain of young Mr. Alexander Madhurst's alcove smoking room.

"Madhurst House," as the old country residence was called, had been the home of the Madhurst family almost to a time "whereof the memory of man runneth not;" at least the old stock of the past generations had resided there ever since the days of Oliver Cromwell, and long before that, if traditions faithfully handed down from father to son were to be credited.

From time to time the different occupants of Madhurst House had added additions to the old homestead, until almost every conceivable style of architecture contributed to the formation of the incongruous pile.

The present occupant of the ancient edifice, "with modern improvements"—as the advertisements say—was Mr. Alexander Madhurst, the sole surviving representative of the family, who, by the way, was a young and handsome bachelor, possessed of a fair fortune, and consequently considered by managing mammas as their legitimate prey—that is to say, provided Providence had blessed them or otherwise given them marriageable daughters.

Madhurst House was located in one of the most pleasant of England's shires, and the fortune of the young man who owned it seemed indeed to be a desirable one.

But who was Gerty Merrill?" I asked, as the detective who was relating this narrative paused.

"Ah, yes. I must tell you something about that young lady before I proceed any further. The young lady in question, though barely turned eighteen, was one of the most proficient and successful female attaches of the Scotland Yard detective service at the time of which I am telling you, though now she is—well, never mind what she is, I came near getting ahead of my story. You will know all before I've finished, however, so to proceed with the natural sequence of events as they transpired.

One day in summer, a couple of months preceding the memorable day when "the girl spy" fell asleep behind the curtain of the alcove at Madhurst House, Mr. Alexander Madhurst called upon me for professional advice and assistance.

His was a rather old story, and this was its substance: "For some months past," said he, "I have lost considerable sums of money from my sleeping room. You may suppose, quite naturally, that I don't keep a great deal of money about me, but I usually have at least fifty pounds in my pocketbook for current expenses.

"I am going home this very day, and I wish you could accompany me and begin your investigation at once, for I desire your personal services in my case."

"Exactly. You have my idea."

This programme was carried out, and I found myself Mr. Madhurst's guest the following day.

One thing was noticeable during my sojourn at Madhurst, and that was that there were no mysterious thefts while I remained there.

More than one night, unknown to Mr. Madhurst himself, I watched his room all night long, but nothing occurred to give me the least clew to the solution of the mystery.

At the expiration of a week, business called me back to London, and I confess I was not a little crestfallen at my failure in a case regarding which I had been so sanguine of success.

The day I left Mr. Madhurst, one of the female servants of the house—a chambermaid—had given notice that she was about to be married, and would no longer continue in his employ.

Mr. Madhurst had casually mentioned that he should at once advertise in the London "Times" for a domestic to fill her place.

I determined that Gerty Merrill should, if possible, secure the place.

I thoroughly posted her regarding the mystery which she was to attempt to solve; and, sure enough, Mr. Madhurst's advertisement appeared, and my quick-witted assistant managed to secure the situation.

For some time no more mysterious thefts occurred at Madhurst House, and Gerty Merrill, who reported to me by letter, had nothing of much importance to communicate.

The rest of the story I will give you mostly in Gerty Merrill's own words.

"A certain young gentleman—a German student, called Max Hertzhoff, who resided that summer with his uncle in the little village of Andover, which was Mr. Madhurst's postoffice address—had made Madhurst's acquaintance, and become a frequent visitor at the old homestead.

From the first time I met the German student, as I did soon after I entered Mr. Madhurst's service, he impressed me as men have seldom done.

I soon found out that Hertzhoff was a student of psychology, a chemist, and a general dabbler in occult mysteries, which have ever found their devotees among the students of the German universities.

Moreover, I was not long in learning that Hertzhoff possessed a great deal of influence over Mr. Madhurst—such as an iron will often gains over the possessor of a weaker one, when by association the opportunity to acquire mental ascendancy is presented, as it was in this case.

Mr. Madhurst was, I am sure, at this time entirely unconscious of the power which Hertzhoff had acquired over him.

It then suddenly flashed upon my mind that the German might, in some way, be connected with the mystery which I was seeking to solve.

I determined that Mr. Hertzhoff should be the object of my especial surveillance, and from that moment, whenever he visited Madhurst House, I kept my eye on him as much as possible.

The day I fell asleep in the armchair behind the alcove curtain of Mr. Madhurst's smoking room—that drowsy autumnal day—was a time when I made an unexpected discovery, as you shall hear.

When I fell asleep, concealed by the folds of the cur-

tain, there was no one in the alcove. When I awoke, with a start, I heard the sound of voices.

I peered from behind the curtain without leaving the chair, and saw Mr. Madhurst and Mr. Hertzhoff.

The latter was speaking earnestly to Madhurst.

I listened, for the first words that reached my ears were such as to chain my attention.

"Then you will not let me have the loan?" said Hertzhoff.

"I cannot, at this time, Hertzhoff. I have invested largely in mining enterprises, and the numerous mysterious thefts, of which I have told you, have materially decreased the amount of ready money at my command just now," answered Madhurst.

"I don't know what I shall do then, I am sure; the debt is one of honor—a gambling debt—and I promised that it should be paid this week; I was almost sure that you could and would accommodate me," replied Hertzhoff.

"I assure you I am sorry that it is not in my power to assist you just at this time. If you could wait until next month, perhaps I could let you have the amount you require, although even then it would be an inconvenience to myself," Madhurst went on.

"The delay would be fatal. I must strive to secure the loan elsewhere. My father, you know, is ignorant of my passion for the gambling table, and were I to solicit him to advance the money I require it would be necessary to reveal the truth. In that case he would probably be enraged at the knowledge, and refuse to serve me. I think I shall try the Shylocks of the city as a last resort."

During this conversation the German student had kept his eyes upon the face of his companion, and now in amazement I beheld Mr. Madhurst's face growing very pale, while gradually his head sank down upon his breast, and his eyes closed as though he had suddenly fallen asleep.

The German regarded Madhurst with a look of exultation.

Arising, after a moment, he made some strange passes over the face of the seemingly sleeping man.

The result of this strange proceeding was at once to cause Mr. Madhurst to breathe heavily, and there could now be no doubt that he was completely oblivious to all his surroundings.

The German glanced about the room.

The next proceeding of the German chained me to my chair.

He drew from his bosom a dirkknife—such as sailors use.

"If he recovers now I'll kill him!" hissed Hertzhoff.

But Madhurst's senses were enchained.

"Now, then, to search the drawer," the German went on.

He strode to the far end of the alcove, out of my sight, and I heard him prying open the drawer of Mr. Madhurst's writing desk, which stood there.

In a moment or so he reappeared.

"Ha, I have found it!" he exclaimed, in an uxultant whisper.

As he spoke he placed a folded paper—which I naturally supposed he had taken from the drawer—in the inside pocket of his coat.

"Now to escape!" he went on.

"I must stop him," I thought; and I felt for my revolver, when, to my chagrin, I discovered that I had carelessly left it in my room.

He was gone in a moment.

I sprang to Mr. Madhurst's side, and aroused him by dashing a glass of ice water in his face.

The young man sprang to his feet.

"Mr. Madhurst, you have been victimized by a clever scoundrel, who possesses the power to mesmerize you. After putting you into a mesmeric trance, as he did just now, your esteemed friend, Max Hertzhoff, forced open yonder desk and possessed himself of some paper which, from his exultation in securing it, is, I suppose, of value," I said.

Madhurst rushed to the desk.

Hurriedly he examined the contents of the drawer, which had been tossed about in considerable confusion.

While he was engaged in searching the desk, I said:

"I must now introduce myself to you in my proper character! I am a detective, one of Mr. L——'s staff, and he sent me here to investigate the mystery which he failed to solve before business called him back to the city."

Mr. Madhurst was surprised and gratified at the same time.

In a few moments he had completed the search of his desk.

"I find that a check for five hundred pounds, which I had drawn up in favor of a creditor of mine who was to call upon me to-day, and which is payable by my London banker to bearer, is missing," Mr. Madhurst said.

"Not a moment must be lost. Telegraph to your banker that the check has been stolen and warn him not to pay it," I advised.

Horses were brought from the stable, and in a few minutes we were riding rapidly on our way to the village.

While Mr. Madhurst was sending his dispatch, I routed out the constable and proceeded to Mr. Hertzhoff's abode.

The gentleman we wanted was not to be found, but a farmer's boy whom we met stated that he had just passed a gentleman on horseback beyond the village who answered to Mr. Hertzhoff's description.

We—that is to say, the constable and myself—dashed down the country road.

We had not proceeded far, when we heard a deep groan from the roadside, and we saw Max Hertzhoff lying there with a broken leg, as we soon discovered.

He had been thrown from his horse.

We found the stolen check in his possession.

The man made no remark save to curse us heartily.

He was conveyed to the village jail, and finally confessed that he had compelled Madhurst to steal from himself. That is to say, during the many months of their intimacy he had acquired such complete mesmeric power over Madhurst, that the latter, when he willed it, would bring his ready cash to him in the dead of night, and, of course, without the slightest knowledge of what he was doing.

This is where Gerty Merrill's part of the story ends.

I may add that she eventually became Mrs. Alexander Madhurst.

GOOD READING

A bullet speeding at a rate of 3,000 feet a second, which is more than 2,000 miles an hour, makes a great disturbance in the atmosphere and creates air waves which, of course, are invisible to the naked eye. Attempts which have been made to take photographs of bullets going at this speed have been unsuccessful, but scientists are still trying. If a photograph could be taken, they say, the print would probably show a space like a body of water marked by what looked like speeding water-bugs, each having a ripple in its wake. Photographs of a bullet going at a rate of speed less than 1,200 feet a second show no air waves at all. But anything cutting through the air at a greater rate than this causes much disturbance. If you draw a stick through the water it causes little eddies and waves to trail behind it. The faster you draw the stick the more waves and wider the angle it will leave. Just so with the bullet.

Sharp criticism by Senators of executive officers for devoting automobiles and carriages attached to their departments to the private use of themselves and their families recently induced Senator Martin, of Virginia, chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, to inquire into the matter. The codified information he received showed that the Government of the United States and of the District of Columbia owned in all 341 passenger motor vehicles and 2,386 horse-drawn passenger carriages of various kinds. All of these vehicles were explained as being for the official use of the officers of the Government whose duties require them to move about. Many of the vehicles are used, however, at odd times by the families of officials. For Secretary of State Bryan three vehicles have been provided, a victoria, a surrey and a brougham at a total cost of \$2,000. This, Mr. Bryan's memorandum explained, was an average cost of \$666.66 a vehicle. The total cost of the motor vehicles listed was \$404,637.35. The total cost of horse-drawn carriages was \$452,362.94. Many of them are of obsolete model. Most of these vehicles were bought with money especially appropriated for the purpose, but Secretary of Labor Wilson reported that he had bought an automobile for about \$1,000, charging it to the contingent expenses of his department.

Driving a team of dogs harnessed to a sledge, as the explorers in the Arctic and Antarctic are accustomed to do, is work for only an expert. "For a person who has had no experience of dog driving to be seated in a sledge with a full team of thirteen dogs would be exactly the same as seating him in a small trotting buggy harnessed with two horses, tandem, without reins, with a steel-shod stick as brake, and with the additional disadvantage that, while the horses might stand till you were ready to start, the dogs, if fresh, would certainly not." So writes Cecil H. Meares, who had charge of the dogs in the British Antarctic Expedition of 1910-1912, in a description of the dogs and the method of harnessing and driving them. An

ordinary dog team consists of twelve working dogs and a leader. The duty of the latter is to obey the word of command and to pick out the best going. The sledge has one trace, made of a rope tapering toward its forward end, which is formed into a loop through which the harness toggles of the leader and the first pair of working dogs are passed. At distances of four and a half feet along the trace loops are spliced into the main trace, and a pair of dogs pull from each loop on opposite sides. Dog harness is much like the breast harness of a horse. It is made of the cotton webbing used for driving reins. The harness ends in an easily running swivel, which is joined to the toggle by about eighteen inches of chrome leather thong. Mr. Meares says dogs thoroughly enjoy pulling, and he has known a dog who thought that his team mate was not working hard enough jump over the main trace, give the lazy dog a good nip and jump back to his place without losing a stride.

Frank G. Hohl, the burglar who robbed the Union Bank, Altoona, Pa., March 23 last of near \$3,000, and is also charged with committing thefts as an auto bandit in Pittsburgh, escaped from the county jail early the other morning. Hohl got out through a small ventilator window six feet above the floor of his cell. He removed his clothing, soaped his body and squeezed through the small opening but five and seven-eighths inches wide and three feet long. Before crawling through the opening he threw his clothes out on the roof and also a rope which he made by cutting the mattress and bed-clothes to pieces and splicing them. Once on the roof, he dressed in his blue serge suit, golf cap and slippers. He tied an end of his self-made rope around the chimney and dropped the rest of it down the side of the building, using it as a ladder. In his descent he scaled by the window of the room where the warden slept. In the jail yard at the other side of the building a guard was on patrol with a rifle, but failed to see the fugitive. When the janitor arrived the rope was dangling from the side of the building and a strong light thrown into the prisoner's cell from the stained glass window, broken away, told the story of his flight. Warden Biddle talked with Hohl at 11 o'clock the previous night and saw nothing to arouse suspicion. All efforts to get trace of Hohl have failed. He had confessed to the bank burglary and was to receive sentence. A railroader reported that he saw a man answering Hohl's description making for the mountains in the southern end of the county and the sheriff and a posse started in that direction in automobiles. The crime for which Hohl was awaiting trial was sensational. The Union Bank was entered during the noon hour by a masked bandit, who drove the cashier and paying teller from their cages at the point of a revolver and shot the cashier in the leg. He then filled a bag with nearly \$3,000 in bills from the bank's counter. A depositor was shot by the bandit as the latter was leaving.

ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

SKELETON OF MONSTER ELEPHANT FOUND.

The practically complete skeleton of a prehistoric elephant was found in La Brea fossil fields near Los Angeles, Cal. "The animal, in life, was more than sixteen feet long," said Frank S. Daggett, director of the Southwest Museum. "It stood fourteen feet high and the tusks are sixteen feet long."

MANY FRENCH SOLDIERS SICK.

Since last fall health conditions have been bad in the French army. Epidemics of typhoid fever and other contagious diseases have raged among the conscripts, the situation at last becoming sufficiently serious for the Chamber of Deputies to appoint Dr. Lachaud, one of their own number, to conduct an exhaustive inquiry. His report has just been submitted to his colleagues. It contains much food for thought for army authorities in the United States and other countries, as well as those of France.

Dr. Lachaud found that most of the barracks were constructed along old-fashioned lines, were ill ventilated and generally unhygienic. He believes that these buildings should be radically changed, and preaches the gospel of fresh air and sunshine, which is only just beginning to be understood in France. He points out that the soldier is always careless of his own well-being.

Dr. Lachaud's most serious charges are leveled at the medical service. He has high praise for the surgeons, doctors and nurses as individuals, but blames the War Department for not keeping the service up to the efficiency mark, both in regard to equipment and the number of medical officers.

GENUINE SWISS CHEESE TO BE MADE IN AMERICA.

The new Swiss colony twelve miles from Olympia, Wash., in Thurston County, received its first settlers when twelve expert dairymen and cheesemakers from Minnesota arrived on the land, piloted by Hugh T. Halbert, of St. Paul, and Prof. Charles M. Andrist, University of Minnesota.

They found one house already completed and work in progress on several others. Four of the men will begin at once the assembling of a dairy herd and lay the foundation of an industry that eventually will lead to the establishment of a Swiss cheese factory and a creamery.

The tract was inspected last fall by Alf Karlen, Swiss Consul at St. Paul, and other experts in the dairying industries, and was pronounced highly favorable for a Swiss colony.

The active work will be undertaken by G. Karlen and E. F. Karlen, respectively brother and son of the Consul, Fred Aufenast and Joseph Guigel. Mr. Andrist has invested in eleven acres, six of which are in the orchard district of the Cowiche Valley. Other members of the party are Mr. and Mrs. Martin Heinzelman, formerly of Ithaca State Park; Mr. and Mrs. G. Andrist, J. Bergman, W. C. Wyman and M. C. Hogg, of North Dakota.

MISSIONARY LIFE IN WEST AFRICA.

J. H. Weeks, now living in the suburb of Footing, England, has seen life in the raw and has had more than enough of stirring adventure in one of the wildest parts of the earth.

For over thirty years Mr. Weeks has labored as a missionary among the cannibal tribes of the Congo. He was the first Englishman to agitate against the establishment of the Congo as a free state, and he was an indefatigable assistant to R. D. Morel, of the Congo Reform Association, in fighting for the suppression of the rubber atrocities in that region.

Although prevented by illness from an immediate return to Central Africa, Mr. Weeks delights to talk about the country and the people, and he was freely communicative when a Daily Chronicle representative visited him. He declines to admit, however, that he, like some other teller of "traveler's tales," has had narrow escapes from death by the score. Yet he has to confess to some thrilling experiences. On one occasion, as the mission steamer drew into a native village which had not been visited before, the party perceived the beach to be literally black with humanity. As they approached more closely they found that the men were armed with bows and arrows, with which they threatened the occupants of the boat, daring them to land. Only by a display of the utmost coolness and by convincing the natives that they were unarmed were the mission party able to proceed in safety.

"It was certainly an anxious time," said Mr. Weeks, "and not until we had turned our boat for the sea and were beyond range could we feel that our lives were safe. Afterward we learned that at the very place a native had been shot in cold blood as a target. Two officers on the bridge of a steamer made a bet that neither could kill a man who was walking along the beach, but one of them was successful.

"That's just the point. White men are looked upon as practically one race, so that if some European, no matter of what nationality, kills a native without reason, they say, 'One of our tribe has been killed; we will kill one of theirs the first chance we get.'"

Speaking of his "parish," an area covering something like 3,000 square miles and taking a week to cover, Mr. Weeks described a collection amounting in value to close upon \$15 once taken at a mission church. This consisted of an umbrella, a tin of gun-powder, a calabash of gun-powder, a bottle of kerosene, eggs, matches, a guncap, a plate, cloth, some Belgian francs, brass rods and a mat.

At the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, are to be found varieties of fish for whose discovery Mr. Weeks was responsible. Four specimens have been named after him. One of these, having the power to distend its body as soon as it finds itself in the gullet of a larger fish which has sought to make a meal of it, blows itself out and little spikes stand up all over it, so that the captor has either to disgorge or choke.

THE MAGIC DAGGER.



A wonderful illusion. To all appearances it is an ordinary dagger which you can flourish around in your hand and suddenly state that you think you have lived long enough and had better commit suicide, at the same time plunging the dagger up to the hilt into your breast or side, or you can pretend to stab a friend or acquaintance. Of course your friend or yourself are not injured in the least, but the deception is perfect and will startle all who see it.

Price, 10c., or 3 for 25c. by mail, postpaid.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

BLACK-EYE JOKE.



New and amusing joker. The victim is told to hold the tube close to his eye so as to exclude all light from the back, and then to remove the tube until pictures appear in the center. In trying to locate the pictures he will receive the finest black-eye you ever saw. We furnish a small box of blackening preparation with each tube, so the joke can be used indefinitely. Those not in the trick will be caught every time. Absolutely harmless. Price by mail 15c. each; 2 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE JOKER'S CIGAR.



The biggest sell of the season. A real cigar made of tobacco, but secreted in the center of cigar about one-half inch from end is a fountain of sparklets. The moment the fire reaches this fountain hundreds of sparks of fire burst forth in every direction, to the astonishment of the smoker. The fire is stage fire, and will not burn the skin or clothing. After the fireworks the victim can continue smoking the cigar to the end. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c; 1 dozen, 90c., mailed, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

ELECTRIC PUSH BUTTON.



The base is made of maple, and the center piece of black wood, the whole thing about 1 1/4 inches in diameter, with a metal hook on the back so that it may be slipped over edge of the vest pocket. Expose to view your New Electric Bell, when your friend will push the button expecting to hear it ring. As soon as he touches it, you will see some of the liveliest dancing you ever witnessed. The Electric Button is heavily charged and will give a smart shock when the button is pushed. Price 10c., by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

MUSICAL SEAT.



The best joke out. You can have more fun than a circus, with one of these novelties. All you have to do is to place one on a chair seat (hidden under a cushion, if possible). Then tell your friend to sit down. An unearthly shriek from the little round drum will send your victim up in the air, the most puzzled and astonished mortal on earth. Don't miss getting one of these genuine laugh producers. Perfectly harmless, and never misses doing its work.

Price 20 cents each, by mail, post-paid
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

CARD THROUGH THE HAT TRICK.



With this trick you borrow a hat, and apparently shove a card up through the crown, without injuring the card or hat. The operation can be reversed, the performer seemingly pushing the card down through the crown into the hat again. It is a trick which will puzzle and interest the closest observer and detection is almost impossible. It is so simple that a child can learn how to perform it in a few minutes.

Price 10 cents each, by mail, post-paid
H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

ITCH POWDER.



Gee whiz! What fun you can have with this stuff. Moisten the tip of your finger, tap it on the contents of the box, and a little bit will stick. Then shake hands with your friend, or drop a speck down his back. In a minute he will feel as if he had the seven years' itch.

It will make him scratch, rear, squirm and make faces. But it is perfectly harmless, as it is made from the seeds of wild roses. The horrible itch stops in a few minutes, or can be checked immediately by rubbing the spot with a wet cloth. While it is working, you will be apt to laugh your suspender buttons off. The best joke of all. Price 10 cents a box, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

Ayvad's Water-Wings.



Learn to swim by one trial

Price 25 cents, Postpaid

These water-wings take up no more room than a pocket-hankerchief. They weigh 3 ounces and support from 50 to 250 pounds. With a pair anyone can learn to swim or float. For use, you have only to wet them, blow them up, and press together the two ring marks under the mouthpiece.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

TRICK PUZZLE PURSE.



The first attempt usually made to open it, is to press down the little knob in the center of the purse, when a small needle runs out and stabs them in the finger, but does not open it. You can open it before their eyes and still they will be unable to open it.

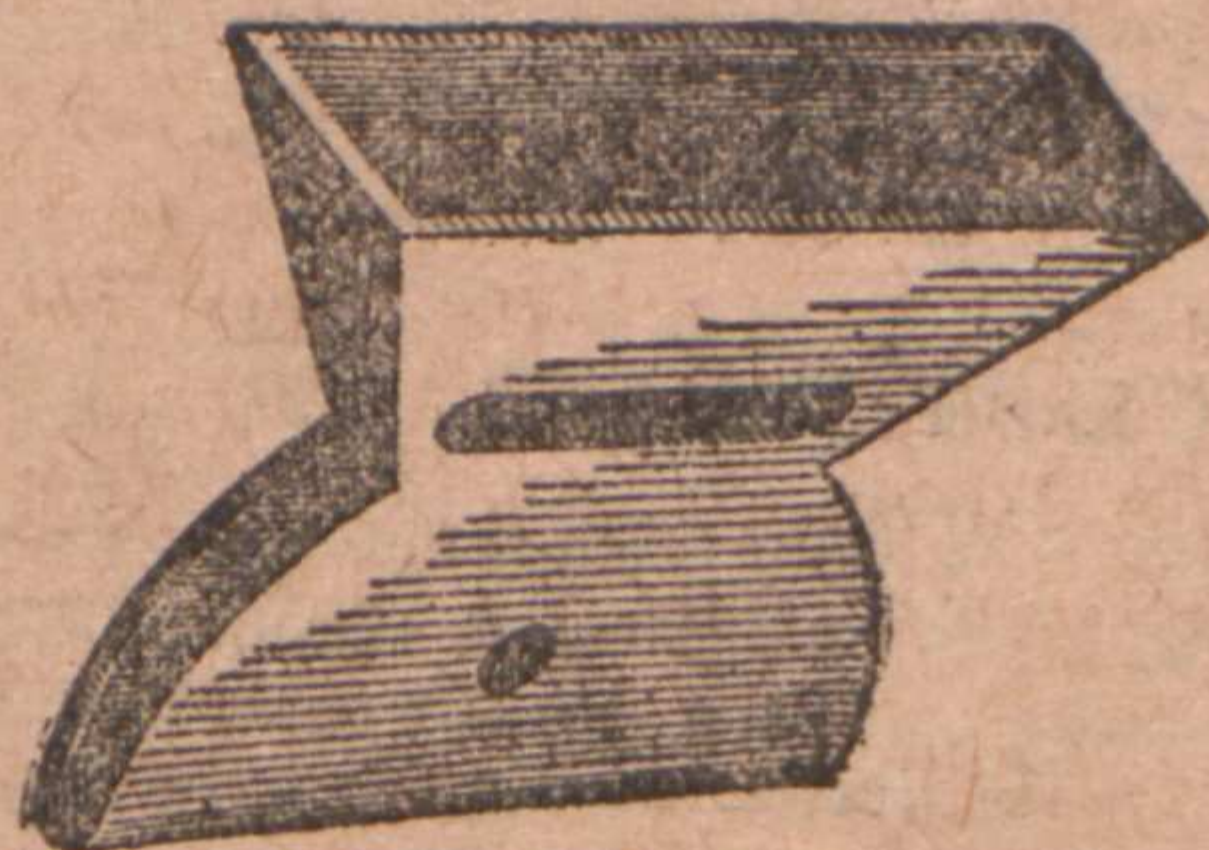
Price, 25c. each by mail, postpaid.
H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

DUPLEX BICYCLE WHISTLE.



This is a double whistle, producing loud but very rich, harmonious sounds, entirely different from ordinary whistles. It is just the thing for bicyclists or sportsmen, its peculiar double and resonant tones at once attracting attention. It is an imported whistle, handsomely nickel plated, and will be found a very useful and handy pocket companion. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c.; one dozen, 75c., sent by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



THE FLUTOPHONE.—A new musical instrument, producing the sweetest dulcet tones of the flute. The upper part of the instrument is placed in the mouth, the lips covering the openings in the centre. Then by blowing gently upon it you can play any tune desired as easily as whistling. But little practice is required to become a finished player. It is made entirely of metal, and will last a lifetime. We send full instructions with each instrument.

Price 8 cents, by mail, postpaid.
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JAPANESE TWIRLER. A wonderful imported paper novelty. By a simple manipulation of the wooden handles a number of beautiful figures can be produced. It takes on several combinations of magnificent colors. Price, 10c., postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

IMITATION FLIES. Absolutely true to Nature! A dandy scarf-pin and a rattling good joke. It is impossible to do these pins justice with a description. You have to see them to understand how lifelike they are. When people see them on you they want to brush them off. They wonder "why that fly sticks to you" so persistently. This is the most realistic novelty ever put on the market. It is a distinct ornament for anybody's necktie, and a decided joke on those who try to chase it.

Price, 10c. by mail postpaid.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

SNAKES IN THE GRASS. Something entirely new, consisting of six large cones, each one nearly one inch in height. Upon lighting one of these cones with a match, you see something similar to a 4th of July exhibition of fireworks. Sparks fly in every direction, and as the cone burns down it throws out and is surrounded with what appears to be grass; at the same time a large snake uncoils himself from the burning cone and lazily stretches out in the grass, which at last burns to ashes but the snake remains as a curiosity unharmed. They are not at all dangerous and can be set off in the parlor if placed on some metal surface that will not burn. An ordinary dust pan answers the purpose nicely. Price of the six cones, packed in sawdust, in a strong wooden box, only 10c., 3 boxes for 25c., 1 dozen boxes 75c., sent by mail postpaid.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

VANISHING CIGAR.



This cigar is made in exact imitation of a good one. It is held by a rubber cord which, with the attached safety pin, is fastened on the inside of the sleeve. When offered to a friend, as it is about to be taken, it will instantly disappear.

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C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE JUMPING FROG.



This little novelty creates a world of laughter. Its chief attractiveness is that it takes a few seconds before leaping high in the air, so that when set, very innocently along side of an unsuspecting person, he is suddenly startled by the wonderful activity of this frog. Price, 15c. each by mail postpaid.

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MANY TOOL KEY RING.



The wonder of the age. The greatest small tool in the world. In this little instrument you have in combination seven useful tools embracing Key Ring, Pencil Sharpener, Nail Cutter and Cleaner, Watch Opener, Cigar Clipper, Letter Opener and Screw Driver. It is not a toy, but a useful article, made of cutlery steel, tempered and highly nickelized. Therefore will carry an edge the same as any piece of cutlery. As a useful tool, nothing has ever been offered to the public to equal it. Price, 15c., mailed, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE PEG JUMPER.



A very effective pocket trick, easily to be performed by any one. A miniature paddle is shown. Central holes are drilled through it. A wooden peg is inside of the upper hole. Showing now both sides of the paddle, the performer causes, by simply breathing upon it, the peg to leave the upper hole, and appear in the middle one. Then it jumps to the lower hole, back to the middle one, and lastly to the upper hole. Both sides of the paddle are repeatedly shown.

Price by mail, 15c.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE FIGHTING ROOSTERS.



A full blooded pair of fighting game cocks. These lilliputian fighters have real feathers, yellow legs and fiery red combs, their movements when fighting are perfectly natural and lifelike, and the secret of their movements is known only to the operator, who can cause them to battle with each other as often and as long as desired. Independent of their fighting proclivities they make very pretty mantel ornaments. Price for the pair in a strong box, 10c.; 3 pairs for 25c. by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

LIGHTNING TRICK BOX.



A startling and pleasing illusion! "The ways of the world are devious," says Matthew Arnold, but the ways of the Lightning Trick Box when properly handled are admitted to be puzzling and uncertain. You take off the lid and show your friends that it is full of nice candy. Replace the lid, when you can solemnly assure your friends that you can instantly empty the box in their presence without opening it; and taking off the lid again, sure enough the candy has disappeared. Or you can change the candy into a piece of money by following the directions sent with each box. This is the neatest and best cheap trick ever invented.

Price, only 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed, postpaid.
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NEW TEN-CENT FOUNTAIN PEN.



One of the most peculiar and mystifying pens on the market. It requires no ink. All you have to do is to dip it in water, and it will write for an indefinite period. The secret can only be learned by procuring one, and you can make it a source of both pleasure and amusement by claiming to your friends what it can do and then demonstrating the fact. Moreover, it is a good pen, fit for practical use, and will never leak ink into your pocket, as a defective fountain pen might do.

Price, 10c. each by mail.
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GOOD LUCK BANKS.



Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nickel brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price 10c. by mail.

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EGGS OF PHARAOH'S SERPENTS.



A wonderful and startling novelty! "Pharaoh's Serpents" are produced from a small egg no larger than a pea. Place one of them on a plate, touch it to it with a common match, and instantly a large serpent, a yard or more in length, slowly uncoils itself from the burning egg. Each serpent assumes a different position. One will appear to gliding over the ground, with head erect, as though spying danger; another will coil itself up, as if preparing for the fatal spring upon its victim while another will stretch out lazily, apparently enjoying its usual noonday nap. Immediately after the egg stops burning, the serpent hardens, and may afterward be kept as an amusing curiosity. They are put up in wooden boxes, twelve eggs in a box. Price, 3c.; 3 boxes for 20c.; 1 dozen boxes for 60c. sent by mail, postpaid.

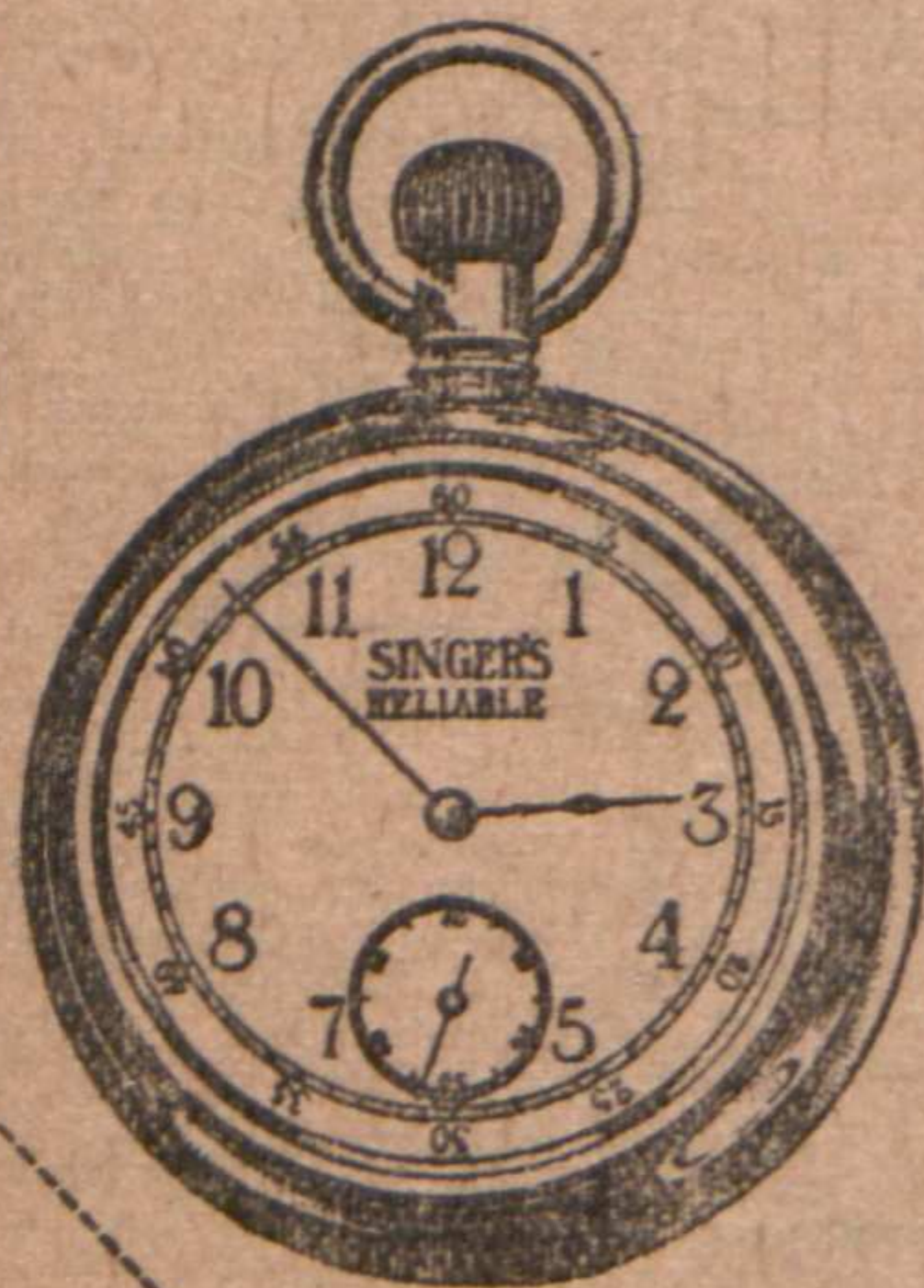
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

DEAD SHOT SQUIRT PISTOL.



If you shoot a man with this "gun" he will be too mad to accept the ancient excuse—"didn't know it was loaded." It loads easily with a full charge of water, and taking aim, press the rubber bulb at the butt of the Pistol, when a small stream of water is squirted into his face. The best thing to do then is to pocket your gun and run. There are "loads of fun" in this wicked little joker, which looks like a real revolver trigger, cock, chambers, barrel and all. Price only 7c.; 4 for 25c.; one dozen 60c. by mail postpaid.

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